

**School of Built Environment**

**The role of oral history in interpreting a place**

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## **Declaration**

To the best of my knowledge and belief this thesis contains no material previously published by any other person except where due acknowledgment has been made.

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university.

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Retha M. S. S.', written in a cursive style.

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## **Abstract**

This exegesis explores the role of oral history in interpreting a place. Oral history methodology was used to explore place from a cultural point of view and emotional geography. The connection between interpretation and oral history methodology was considered through the constructivist approach. Kalamunda in Western Australia was used as the subject place for this exegesis. A series of oral history interviews were conducted with members of the Kalamunda community of varying ages to examine how oral history is used to express and interpret place.

The research supports the use of oral history methodology to understand the social and cultural history of place. Its use in interpretation engages audiences through the stories of people who have a connection to place and understand its meaning and significance. Oral history also provides an emotional connection with audiences and highlights multiple layers of meaning in place when used in interpretation. The research found that the information gathered in oral history interviews reveals meaning and significance of place. Oral history enables people to record information about their own experiences and sites of meaning. This ensures that as a place changes over time the information particular to it is retained for the future. This research asserts that oral history methodology has a key position in the interpretation of place.



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## **Introduction**

Over the last forty years oral history has developed from a methodology used primarily to record radical history (Green 2008, 89; Pickering 2008, 207; Thompson 2000, 65) to a widely recognised, and used, methodology to record information in many different fields from law, health and social sciences, for example Bryan, 2011, Boschma, 2012, von der Goltz, 2011 respectively. This exegesis has focused on its use in cultural heritage, specifically on its role in the interpretation of place. To understand oral history's role in interpreting a place the elements of memory, place and interpretation are investigated through this exegesis. During the time it has taken oral history to become a widely used methodology there has also been a change in the understanding of the content of oral history and how the information can be used. The recent recognition that layers of meaning and context are also recorded within memories provides oral history with a perspective of the past which is complementary to other sources. Oral history is increasingly used in interpretation to engage with audiences and to bring a personal element to often substantially written text-based information. The use of memory as recorded through oral history assists audiences to understand and relate to place, particularly when addressing how it has changed. To understand place, its cultural and social contexts and its geography need to be considered. These elements provide information about the history of the place, its people and how it changed over time.

This exegesis explores how the information gathered in oral history interviews can be used to interpret place, in order for its meaning and significance to be revealed. The research also explores the content of oral history interviews and their role as a cultural and social record. Kalamunda was used as the location of the research as it is a place with a distinct geographical location and a sense of place. I live in Kalamunda and am aware of its history and wanted to apply my theoretical knowledge to a place I was familiar with, in order to understand it better. As a result of using Kalamunda to explore the research question, this research is also a study of Kalamunda. The exploration of oral history, place and interpretation and how they can be used to understand place, however, can be applied to other places.

At the beginning of my research objectives were formed: to investigate the use of oral history in the interpretation of place; to consider the effectiveness of oral history in interpretation; to examine whether oral history can lead to a deeper understanding of a community; to investigate the use of oral history as a valid, significant and

useful tool to gather historical information; and to explore sense of place through the oral histories collected on Kalamunda.

To explore the research question and to understand what information is provided through oral histories, a series of interviews with members of the Kalamunda community of varying ages were conducted. The ages ranged from 44 to 95, at the time of the interview, with at least two people in each 10 year age bracket. All of the interviewees highlighted the strong sense of place which is felt by residents of Kalamunda. The qualitative data in the oral history interviews will add to the knowledge of Kalamunda's social history. The interview transcripts are included as an appendix to the exegesis.

This exegesis uses oral history methodology to explore a cultural view of place through emotional geography and the constructivist approach in interpretation to position my research within the existing literature. Emotional geography refers to the emotional connection people develop towards place (Kearney 2009, 210-211; Smith, Davidson, Cameron and Bondi 2009, 4). Oral history records memories that contribute to people's sense of place. These memories can be used to interpret the history of place and to highlight the significant sites of its community. Oral history can be used to explore cultural and social perspectives which surround the memories of past events because it is a cultural record rather than primarily a historical record. The term "cultural record" is used to describe a holistic view of the past which includes verifiable events, multiple perspectives of events and historical and social contexts of the place which have been used to interpret the past. The term "historical record" is used to describe a type of source which was created to record a particular event or aspect of history. It has also been used in interpretation to provide information about place through people's everyday lives. The constructivist approach to interpretation advocates that audiences use their own knowledge to understand what is presented and make their own meanings (Hein 1998, 157 and 179). Applying this approach to oral history has highlighted the importance of showing multiple perspectives and considering audiences as a potential source of information. It also reveals the role that audiences play in shaping the meaning of what is presented based on their experiences.

Chapter one is a review of literature on memory, place and interpretation. My research is positioned within the theoretical framework in which the qualitative data has been analysed.

The methodology of conducting the oral histories for this exegesis has been analysed in relation to the literature in Chapter two. The exegesis has investigated how the information in the oral history interviews can be used in interpretation and as a record of the cultural context of events and place. This chapter leads into a further exploration of the research topic in the following three chapters.

Chapters' three to five explore the links between oral history, place and interpretation to answer the research question. The central question of chapter three is how oral history methodology communicates aspects of the past and connection to place. This chapter discusses how oral history records people's memory of place and sense of place. This information is important to retain as it tells the social history of place.

Chapter four investigates how the information contained in oral history records the everyday and particularities of place, retaining meaning. This chapter discusses the way places and events of meaning are part of everyday life. When comparing memories multiple layers of meaning can be shared and used to promote the cultural heritage of place.

The relationship between the audience and the use of oral history in interpretation is the focus of chapter five. In this chapter the ways in which oral history is used in interpretation to convey emotion and empower audiences to form meanings is explored.

Kalamunda is a suburb located on the Darling Ranges escarpment in the eastern part of the Perth metropolitan area, located 25km from Perth. Kalamunda is one of the suburbs of the Shire of Kalamunda which has three distinct areas, foothills, escarpment and eastern rural areas. Kalamunda can also be viewed as a small town and has the remnants of a country town in its layout which consists of a main street with other amenities branching off. The town centre consists of a main street lined with small shops, cafes with other shopping areas accessible from this road. The retention of many historic buildings provides a physical continuity with the past and new buildings in the main street have generally conformed to a similar size and scale. Due to the size of the town centre all amenities and facilities are within walking distance of each other. The topography of the town centre is quite undulating so there are views of parts of the town centre from higher points within it.

A large proportion of the population is stable, having lived in the area for a long time, creating a sense of community. There is a feeling that the community sees itself as different from other parts of the metropolitan area. The Shire of Kalamunda and Chamber of Commerce websites promote this view through the emphasis on the local natural environment and culture. There are national parks nearby and lots of trees throughout the town. Kalamunda is also the northern terminus of the long distance walking trail, the Bibbulmun Track which provides an opportunity to appreciate the local natural environment.

The area has a long history starting with the Indigenous Beeloo people living in the area between the Canning River and the Darling Ranges. From the 1860s Europeans began to move into the area for timber milling and agricultural purposes such as fruit growing (Slee and Shaw 1979, 1) which were important for the Western Australian economy. Due to the increase in population and rail infrastructure of the timber milling companies, many other people began to settle in the area. Frederick Stirk cleared the first piece of land in the town of Kalamunda in 1881 (Slee and Shaw 1979, 64). The Stirk's original house still exists just outside the town centre. The town site was approved in 1901 and the name Calamunnda chosen by a committee from nineteenth century Benedictine monk and settler, Bishop Salvado's collection of Aboriginal vocabulary. According to Bishop Salvado's book *cala* meant bush and *munnda* hearth (Slee and Shaw 1979, 110). Kalamunda was also the location of many guest houses which were used by people holidaying from Perth or convalescing.

## **Chapter 1 - Oral history, Place and Interpretation theoretical framework**

This chapter examines the theoretical framework used to examine oral history, place and interpretation. This exegesis enters the debates through my key idea that greater reflection is necessary to explore the cultural and social perspectives contained within oral history methodology. This chapter provides a background to the use of the literature in the following chapters. Oral history methodology, place and interpretation are interlinked as place provides the information which is recorded and it is then interpreted to convey the cultural and social perspectives within memory.

The increased use of oral history to record the social history of place by many groups, including in my own projects, led me to become interested in the ways in which oral history is used to engage with visitors to place. I also became interested in what is recorded, how the information is connected to other people's memories and connected to place. These connections form layers of meaning in place as illustrated by Schama (1995) in his book *Landscape and Memory*. Sharing the stories and memories of place through oral history assists others to understand and relate to it.

The literature review is split into the topics of oral history, place and interpretation. Oral history methodology is critiqued and oral history is reflected on as a cultural record which contains historical and cultural information within memories. The literature on place is positioned through the view that geographical and sociological views of place should be combined in order to have an understanding of place. These views are combined through emotional geography which highlights the emotional connection to place. The constructivist approach will be used to critique the literature on interpretation as it emphasises the need for multiple viewpoints in order to have a better understanding of presented information, for example as recorded in oral history.

### **Oral History**

#### **Critique of oral history methodology**

Over the last forty years, there has been a change in the criticisms of oral history which was once centred on its comparison with text based sources using historiographical methodology and its limitations. Oral history methodology is now

recognised to contain more than historical information and can look at the meaning of what is said as well as being a cultural record. In the nineteenth century, French historian Jules Michelet, interviewed people who could provide information of the past that was not accessible in written history. As the rise of the professional historian occurred in the nineteenth century, oral sources were dismissed in favour of written records to document the origin and growth of nations (Green 2004, 1; Thompson 2000, 55). Oral sources were viewed as folklore. Since its re-emergence in the twentieth century as a methodology for recording historical information, oral history has been used to record life histories and to record gaps in social and labour history. The methodology of interviewing people for historical records was revived in 1948 by Allan Nevins, at Columbia University, who interviewed prominent people of the time. He thought that oral history would record the increasing amount of oral based communication occurring at that time through greater availability of telecommunications (Starr 1996, 40-41). During the twentieth century, various projects were implemented to record the lives of people and businesses. Some examples of these projects include a United States government implemented program to interview people affected by the 1930s Depression (Starr 1996, 43), Studs Terkel's interviews with many people to record their everyday experiences and lives during the 1930s and 1940s (Frisch 1998, 31) and interviews conducted in the 1950s with employees at Ford for a history of the company (Starr 1996, 45).

In the late twentieth century there has been recognition among oral historians of the layers of meaning and context within the recorded information and the way in which oral history creates an historical record. Oral history was once viewed in opposition to narrative text based history, however, "...memory and history have now come to be understood as inextricably entangled in terms of scholarly definitions and in the circulation of historical knowledge" (Darian-Smith and Hamilton 2013, 372). Oral history methodology has been accepted into the historiographical methodology (Gluck 1999, 6; Grele 1978, 36; Starr 1996, 54) and multiple perspectives are included to highlight both sides of history. Lowenthal (2012, 3) argues that the position of history as the only way to access the past has been overtaken by memory and its greater emphasis on immediacy and emotional connection. This view, however, does not recognise the varying uses of memory in the recording of history. Radstone (2000, 2) argues that throughout history an interest in memory and its importance to society has changed, sometimes it is valued and sometimes it is not valued. As information has emerged from other viewpoints there have been



reflections on the way in which the past has been interpreted and recorded. Hamilton (1994, 12) and Thompson (2000, 2) argue that history is viewed as official memory, while oral history records a different perspective of the past. Oral history as a methodology to record memory provides another perspective as well as a tool to explore and evaluate the processes of memory and how people make sense of the past (Frisch 1998, 33; Hamilton and Shopes 2008, xv).

The following section will address aspects of oral history methodology which have been critiqued previously: multiple perspectives, aural quality, dynamics between interviewee and interviewer, representativeness of the interviewee's responses and reliability and subjectivity of oral history.

### **Oral history records multiple perspectives**

Oral history continued to develop as a methodology in the 1960s when there was an emphasis to document minority groups, address gaps in social history and document labour history. Documenting labour history was particularly emphasised in the United Kingdom because practitioners wanted to address the socio-political imbalance within existing documentary history (Young 2006, 3). Oral history practitioners also recorded historical information not recorded in other sources as a way to recover history from eyewitnesses. Later, oral history was used to document history from many viewpoints such as from feminist perspectives or migrant experiences. One of the benefits of oral history is that groups or individuals can tell their own stories in their own ways rather than having it retold by someone outside the group. Oral history also records cultural information, such as stories of place, sense of place and language. These aspects have been used particularly with refugee groups or groups who are recording cultural land information for legal purposes (Thompson 2000, 2). It is this cultural and emotional information which is included within oral history that is not reflected on when oral history is primarily received as an historical record. As cultural practices change over time, however, this information becomes very important as it also recalls their meaning. Reflecting on this information can lead to further enquiries of everyday life in the past, as well as providing rich detail to the recalled memories.

In providing an avenue for multiple perspectives on social, political or historical events, oral history is also used to capture multiple perspectives of place or an event. People will recall different aspects of an event or of place which provides a picture of the past when put together. This information is framed by how a person

has experienced events through their life and ways in which they have changed (Thompson 2000, 2). The current use of oral history emphasises the everyday and the specific local information which can then be used to enrich local history and to link local stories to a wider history. Multiple views are necessary to gain a comprehensive view of the past and to verify objective information.

### **Aural quality**

Oral history's aural quality is an important aspect to highlight among the different types of historical and cultural resources available to researchers. The advantages of oral history are that there is no doubt of its authorship, it retains a freshness and candour of conversation when compared to written documents, provides an avenue for people who are not comfortable with writing to tell their story (Hoffman 1996, 92) and brings a feeling of immediacy to the past when used in interpretation (Thompson 2000, 20-21). Listening to the audio version of an interview the person's expression, tone and narrative style are more apparent as well as their language and rhythm of speech (Portelli 1991, 47). Cultural information can be transmitted through the voice, such as the person's accent and language which may have been influenced by their family or childhood place. Audiences have a different perspective of the interviewee when listening to the interview for these reasons when compared to reading the transcript. The layers of meaning contained in what is said and how it is said can also be understood. While meaning can be gained from reading the transcript, greater meaning is conveyed in the audio form as the emotion can be heard in the voice noted by Shopes (2006, 264) and Frisch (2006, 103). Oelofse (2011, 43) argues that verbal and non-verbal cues, such as pauses, can be analysed to test the reliability of the information provided by the interviewee. Listening to the interview can also reveal what is not answered which can be determined from the interviewee's reaction to particular questions. This information can be analysed within the historical context as well as psychologically to determine meaning through "the absences of information, or the inclusion of jokes" (Young 2006, 3). Comparing interviews of people talking about the same time or of similar age can determine the significance of what is said or not said and the way in which it is delivered orally. There has been a move towards the greater use of the audio version of the interview in interpretation, rather than the reliance on the text based version for these reasons. The performative nature of an oral history interview also often suits people's individual narrative styles better than the written form as the conventions are less strict when speaking compared to writing. This often results in the interviewee being disappointed in the transcript as they believe that they do not

speak that way. It should be noted that the oral interview and the transcript are two different formats of the information recorded in the oral history interview and follow different conventions. The relationship between the interviewer and interviewee can also be analysed by listening to the interview.

### **Dynamics between interviewee and interviewer**

Among the criticisms of oral history are the effects of the power dynamics between interviewer and interviewee regarding the information provided (Hoffman 1996; Portelli 1991; Thompson 2000; Tibbles 2012). These dynamics can also affect the structure of the interview, as well as the sense of ownership of information when it is used after the interview. The practice of shared authority provides everyone involved in the creation and use of the interview with a better understanding of how the information will be used (Abrams 2010, 167; Shopes 2006, 269). This ensures that the interviewee, who provides the content, is part of the whole process rather than just as an informant used by the interviewer. Added to this, the interviewee may feel undervalued if there is little communication with the interviewer after the interview. While the power dynamics between the interviewer and interviewee cannot be overcome, an understanding of the cultural and social dynamics may alleviate some of the issues.

Another aspect of this relationship is that the narrative is structured around interview questions and what the interviewer wants to know (Portelli 1991, 54). This influences what information is provided. Tibbles (2012, 164) states that a rapport is necessary to ensure interviewees are comfortable disclosing personal information, however, there will always be limits to how much information is disclosed. Interviewees, for example, may focus primarily on their positive experiences and celebratory events of the community their story is set in (Shopes 2006, 264), rather than negative aspects. The information provided, therefore, is chosen to be shared during the interview and compared to an informal conversation the interviewee may censor information. This criticism of oral history can only be limited, through the skill of the interviewer and making the interviewee as comfortable about the process as possible.

### **Representativeness of the interviewee's responses**

The selection of interviewees and the extent that their responses are representative within the framework of existing information has also been argued as a limitation of oral history. Previous criticisms (Lummis 2006, 257; Thompson 2000, 22) have

been concerned with the information being representative of existing knowledge and in the case of recording information about place or community, that the people interviewed were the most representative of the place. These arguments position the information within existing knowledge which is usually the dominant story being told. In every case the interviewee is speaking from unique experience and is recalling and interpreting what is shared. The stories of women and people from minority backgrounds were previously not included within the patriarchal framework of history and culture as their experiences were held to be of little importance. As oral history has been used to uncover these multiple perspectives, they have become increasingly accepted into the framework of history. Oral history has been used to provide many more people with a vehicle to tell their story and these stories are being used to explore the past, however, Grele (1978, 39) cautions against "...assuming that because someone says something it automatically contains a truth beyond those of established historians who have written in the past." Oral history, as with all historical sources, should be tested against other sources in order to understand its representativeness.

To understand place or an event from the past, as wide a variety of people as possible should be interviewed. For example people of different ages, cultural backgrounds and interests as everyone will remember something different depending on these perspectives. Rather than viewing oral history interviews in a quantitative way to get a representative sample size, the qualitative information should be emphasised as all interviews are representative of a person's views of the past (Grelle 1978, 41). Reflecting on the cultural information contained in the oral histories, some generalisations can be made which can also lead to future research. To further Grele's argument, the representation of information recorded in oral history should not be viewed as a limitation confined to this methodology. A representation of the past will not be understood by one interview. Other sources, including other oral history interviews, should be sought to answer an historical enquiry. The investigation of the past through oral history methodology means that at the time of collecting the oral history it was a representation of the past and always continues to be so. This representation may change in the future with the uncovering of further information. Oral history is a cultural record which contributes to an understanding of a culture as a whole. The ongoing collection of oral history interviews to find out more about the past will often result in the repeated telling of some stories, with other stories told less frequently. These stories should not be dismissed as being not representative of the past and the culture at that time.

Rather, these stories may be widely known but may not be included in an interviewee's interpretation of the past.

### **Reliability and subjectivity of oral history**

Among the criticisms of oral history are the reliability and subjectivity of the information contained within oral history and the reliability of memory. The use of the words "reliability" and "subjectivity", however, are used within the context of historiographical methodology and, therefore, have connotations of searching for a credible interpretation of the past. Within an oral history context, Hoffman (1996, 90) defines reliability with regard to the consistency of the retelling of information and validity as the degree of the information conforming to other primary and secondary sources of the event they are recalling. Lummis (2006, 257) states that validity is determined by the degree that the interview is representative of the wider social context. Information may be consistently recalled, however, but not be a reliable representation of an event when compared to other sources. Portelli (1991, 51) uses the term factual credibility, rather than reliability as this highlights the need to compare sources of information. On reflection, oral and written sources share the same limitations of historiographical methodology which have been primarily directed towards oral history. It is argued, therefore, that a critical reading of many types of sources provides a better understanding of the past.

Currently, all historical sources are understood to be subjective and their context and biases should be considered when using them. Many writers, for example Oelofse (2011, 42) and Portelli (1991, 53) acknowledge that all historical sources have some sort of bias which need to be identified by the researcher. The bias provides the information about the cultural background of the interviewee and sets a context to the information provided in the oral history interview. The subjective information within an oral history interview needs to be weighed against the objective information to determine how reliable it is (Thompson, 2000, 75) and evaluated for bias, validity and quality of interview (Grele 1978, 38). Acknowledging the limitations of all sources, they need to be tested against each other for reliability (Starr 1996, 40; Vansina 1996, 125) to determine how typical the information is for that time (Lummis 2006, 255; O'Farrell 1979, 4; Thompson 2000, 75). This also includes other oral sources which address a similar time period. O'Farrell (1979, 7) points out that the role of the historian is to look at all the available sources of information which are used to understand the past, rather than as he argues, solely relying on talking to people and getting their view of the past. This view should not

limit the contribution oral history can make to providing different perspectives to aspects of the past.

The reliance on memory in oral history means that the ways in which people recall their memory can change over time, so it is important to understand how reliable the interviewee's recall of the event is. People's recall can also change depending on the audience. Oral history is criticised due to people not distinguishing between views they held in the past with those they hold now (Lummis 2006, 258). It is difficult to overcome this as memories undergo constant reinterpretation depending on other experiences and outside influences each time memories are recalled (Finnegan 1996, 132). Analysing oral history interviews with the understanding that each is an interpretation of the past, reduces the argument that this is a limitation. The reliability of memory also depends on whether it is something that was directly experienced by the person or whether it was experienced by someone else who has told the interviewee, who is then recalling the other person's account. In this recall they may miss out an element of the memory, as it is their interpretation of what they have been told.

Another aspect to the issues of subjectivity and reliability of oral history is the acknowledgement that memory is fallible and is unreliable for specific facts. The activities of the past cannot be known definitively, so any source is an interpretation where an aspect of the past is revealed. The contextual information recalled with the objective information such as emotions, senses and people involved with the event are also useful to understanding the significance of the memory to the person and its wider cultural context. Oral history does not separate the person who has experienced the events from the events themselves. It is a recall of what the person experienced and how the person interpreted it.

### **Reflecting on the change in oral history criticism**

The limitations imposed by historiographical methodology were previously at the centre of the debates regarding oral history. The current view of oral history (Darian-Smith and Hamilton 2013, 377-378; Keightley 2008, 177) is that it should be reflected on as a cultural record which can explore cultural and social perspectives. It is an interpretation of the past as experienced by one person. The memories are viewed within a wider cultural context, rather than as previously viewed, fitting into existing historical information. Reflecting on oral history as a cultural record which also contains historical information considers its context within other people's

memories as well as how it relates to other types of sources. Keightley (2008, 191) further illustrates this point,

memory is a method by which historical data can be brought to life and fruitfully contextualised with depth, detail and alternative perspectives, while historical enquiry can help make sense of the changing role of memory over historical time.

Memory work, such as oral history, can help to gain new understandings of the past and present (Kuhn 2002, 10) and explore connections between individuals and public events of history (Kuhn 2002, 5). Oral historians in the late twentieth century have reflected on interviews and treated them as representations of the past which were influenced by many factors. This postmodern view removed the “myth of objectivity” (Gluck 1999, 4) in oral history which was previously held by early oral historians who were schooled in sociological methods. Viewing the oral history as a cultural record, rather than just from an historical point of view, the content can be analysed within a wider context. This reduces the impact of the reliability and subjectivity of the interviewee's memories.

The subtext of what is said, for example the reason for the recall of a particular memory and its meaning, has become an important aspect of oral history which expresses the importance of the event and links it with a wider cultural context (Hamilton and Shopes 2008, xii and xv; Moran 2004, 60). The information provided through oral history is constantly evolving or creating links between the past and the present to form a richer story of the culture it represents. There is a sense of fluidity and unfinished-ness in the gathering of information (Portelli 1991, vii) whereas a documentary form of history provides a sense of completion until it is later revised. As people recall events from the past in the present the memories are reinterpreted through the views the person holds at the time of the interview.

Reflecting on the social and cultural information within the oral history interview, the information is viewed relationally to other people's memories of the particular time or place, rather than viewed individually as a source. Young (2006, 4) says that oral history is about the recollection of events rather than what happened, so it has been previously viewed as an illegitimate form of historiographical process. The meaning of what is recalled and how the past is remembered are also emphasised. The criticisms of oral history methodology have changed over time as it was previously evaluated through historiographical methodology. Perks and Thomson (2006, 3)

state that in the 1970s oral historians argued that the criticisms of bias and unreliability levelled at oral history were actually its strength.

Place and interpretation are used to explore how oral history can be used to understand cultural and social perspectives. The discussions within the literature of place and interpretation are examined in the following sections.

## **Place**

Place has been viewed in an academic context from a geographical position and an anthropological and/or sociological position. While not in opposition, these two views look at place in very different ways, one at the physical location and the other on the impact people have on place through meaning making. The merging of geographical and sociological views of place provides an understanding of its distinctive identity. These views, therefore, cannot be separated and are both of equal importance when analysing place. Emotional geography is an example of the merging of these two views which combines sensory and affective qualities of place as shown in the character, arrangement and interrelations of place, people and heritage (Kearney 2009, 211). Ahmed (2010, 33) defines affect as the connection between an object or place and the person experiencing feelings towards it. The geographical location is the setting of events and sites of significance. As well as the components of a physical place, the relationship between people and place provides meaning to the cultural landscape (Hawke 2010, 1332). The discussion on place is framed around emotional geography.

## **Sense of place**

Having an emotional connection with place and understanding its meaning contributes to a person's sense of place which is defined as "the ability to recognise different places and different identities of a place" (Relph 1976, 63). A person's sense of place expresses both the geographical and sociological aspects which combine with associated meanings to highlight connection to place. Therefore, it is an expression of emotional geography. Once the particularities of place are known, it goes from being ordinary to being distinctive (Read 1996, 197) as a person understands the changes to that place and has a connection to it. Simone Weil, a French philosopher of the 1940s, recognised that people need to be attached to a place (Jetson 2009, 14). People also have a need to turn space into place and to identify it as different from other places (Read 1996, 2) which is done through changing the geographical features and creating sites of meaning through their



experiences. Sense of place is also seen as *genius loci* the sum of all topographical, manmade and experiential features (Hawke 2010, 1332; Longstreth 2008, 1) such as its cultural and social history. Sense of place also refers to places that were once there, providing an understanding of how settlement patterns in the locality have changed (Walsh 1992, 155). This recognises the importance of the memory of place to a person who has experienced it and has an emotional connection with it. Walsh (1992, 150) and Relph (1976, 38) both state that sense of place provides people with a reference to engage with and enjoy a complex world and that it creates a sense of security. People's sense of place informs their views on positive and negative aspects of change which have affected their place (Walsh 1992, 157).

The community's sense of place cannot be experienced in the same way as that of someone outside the community, as the deep understanding of the place is not present (Relph 1976, 22). Hawke (2010, 1334) agrees, linking it with inside-ness, a feeling of belonging, knowing and being known in the community.

### **Placelessness**

In opposition to sense of place, placelessness is defined as uniform and standardised places which lack distinctive features (Relph 1976, 118); the weakening of individual identity of places where they look, feel and offer the same things (Relph 1976, 90) and an environment without significant places or the acknowledged significance in places (Relph 1976, 143). Placelessness, Johnson (2012, 830) argues, is a product of Western society to separate culture and nature and the knowledge transfer between them. In placeless times, which has been argued is the current postmodern era, there is a need to recognise the identity of place. Massey (1994 122) argues that this can only be achieved through social relations, not the physical geography of place. Even in places which could be argued are the same, such as shopping centres or airports, the way people act in those places, as well as decorative elements express the physical place it is located. Through embracing the local sense of place and the cultural context of place, through emotional geography, the fear that placelessness would become more dominant in an increasingly connected world has not eventuated.

### **Time-space compression**

As with placelessness, time-space compression has been viewed negatively because it was thought to threaten the identities of individual places, however, it has

provided an opportunity for the promotion of the particular qualities of place to a global audience. It uses the connections between people to link places. Time-space compression refers to the “movement and communication across space, to the geographical stretching out of social relations and to our experience of all this” (Massey 1994, 147). Concerns about the loss of a secure, distinct identity of place (Harvey 2012, 27; Massey 1994, 121) arose as places were linked through increased ease of travel and communications. It was argued that the greater the connections between places, the more susceptible they were to homogenising influences such as placelessness which would reduce the diverse local culture (Seddon 1997, 113).

As the influence of time-space compression has become greater, there has been an increased interest in the local and celebration of what is distinct about individual places. This may be viewed as a reaction against time-space compression (Seddon 1997, 127), however, my position is that it has made people investigate local history and culture and want to explore links between places for example through cultural practices, architecture and migration of people groups. As Massey (1994, 5) explains the particularity of place is constructed and understood through the mix of links and interconnections beyond the place. In the postmodern era a consciousness of place which is about movement, linkages and a sense of place that also builds on the past should be promoted (Massey 1994, 142). The increased communication of the importance of place to people and their relationship, through emotional geography, provides a positive use of time-space compression. Harvey (2012, 3) argues that time-space compression has led to new meanings of place as there is a greater ability to compare places and to link activities occurring in different places. A global view of place which is relational to other places and changes over time (Kabachnik 2012, 214) is necessary for all places to continue into the future. This will ensure that places do not stagnate and can use its particularities to attract visitors.

### **Reflecting on the change of view of place**

Early debate about place was concerned with thinking geographically and setting places within a wider spatial context (Kabachnik 2010, 199; Massey 1994, 117). Over the last thirty years, discussions of place in the fields of geography and anthropology have increased (Kabachnik 2012, 210) which has led to an understanding of the interrelationship between the two fields. This has developed as the meaning of place has become more important to people in a postmodern

world where people have many links between places, often on a global scale. As this has occurred, the importance of meaning and identity in place has risen in prominence. Parr (2013, 474) notes that humanistic geography first attempted to address the relation between people and the world, including attachments to place. Emotional geography “attempts to understand emotion – experientially and conceptually – in terms of its socio-*spatial* meditation and articulation rather than as entirely interiorised subjective mental states.” (Bondi, Davidson and Smith 2007, 3).

As Massey (1994, 121) argues, places are viewed as open and porous networks of social relations, not bounded spatial areas, so the connections between people have become more important to place. People’s roles in changing the geographical conditions of place and the meanings they ascribe to it need to be considered when addressing place as every place is altered by the marks people have left on it (de Certeau 1984, 44). People are also altered by their association with place. As cultural aspects of place are highlighted, the unique aspects of the people who live there and those who visit are recognised. These aspects combine the physical setting, activities and meaning to form a place’s identity (Relph 1976, 48) and a person’s sense of place. The connection between cultural identity, social history and urban design within place has also been explored by Hayden (1995, 15).

Multiple perspectives and experiences associated with personal memory, community commemoration and use of public spaces can change meaning over time (Relph, 1976, 56) and provide a fluidity of meaning in place. The multiplicity of place is important as Massey (1994, 5) argues that its identity is unfixed and contested. Sense of place is plastic and depends on who is identifying with the place (Seddon 1997, 139).

Anderson and Smith (2001, 7) argue that the concept of emotional geography provides a way of understanding the world. Knowing and understanding the social context provides the meaning which surrounds places and specific buildings or locations within place. Meaning is located within a particular place (Relph 1976, 8) which is emotive and linked to memories (Kabachnik 2012, 213; Robertson 2009, 156). The memories of place can become an important part of a person’s identity. These associations with place add to its social and cultural layers. This allows places to be understood in the present (Walsh 1992, 157) when there may be little information about the social history of particular sites within place.

The next section will address interpretation debates and how they are used to link people and place through highlighting cultural and social meaning.

## **Interpretation**

Interpretation conveys meaning and significance to link place or an object and the audience. It constructs a view of the past from evidence in the present. Copeland (2006, 84) states that the role of the interpreter is to identify different ways to show information and provide opportunity for discussion. The discussion on interpretation is framed through constructivism. Constructivism is a learning theory where the learner constructs knowledge from what is presented (Hein 1998, 22). This approach argues that understandings are formed as experiences of objects, ideas and sites (Copeland 2006, 84) are reflected on. The constructivist approach to interpretation provides the framework for complex views of the past to be presented. Interpreters using the constructivist approach identify and understand the different ways visitors learn through enquiry (Copeland 2006, 94; Hein 1998, 166). This approach enables the sharing of information between the interpreter and the audience which contributes to further information becoming available and the promotion of different perspectives.

Copeland (2006, 84) positions the constructivist approach at one end of a spectrum to the positivist approach which presents one view of complex issues. Transmission absorption theory, where the learner will absorb what is presented, is at the opposite end of the learning theory spectrum to constructivism (Hein 1998, 29). This way of learning or presenting information is structured and directs learners to use the information to form a certain conclusion (Hein 1998, 27). In both of these cases audiences will either engage with the information or will reject it depending on whether it fits with their existing knowledge. Taylor and Medina (2013, 2) outline that a positivist approach is the product of research and describes what is occurring through observation to then determine what or why it has occurred. While this is suitable for the interpretation of some information, it is the argument of this exegesis that it does not provide the scope necessary to understand the past from a cultural point of view which depicts the past from multiple perspectives. Current interpretation practices use aspects of the constructivist approach and have moved away from predominantly using didactic formats and the promotion of single meanings as outlined in the positivist approach or didactic learning. The constructivist approach encourages audiences to engage with the information in different formats which often use all the senses. My position is that using the

constructivist approach is a more appropriate framework to interpret place than using a didactic method such as positivism or transmission absorption, particularly when using oral history, as multiple perspectives can be used to illustrate layers of cultural and social context. The content of oral history is subjective and it may be perceived differently by audiences due to their own experiences.

### **Audiences**

The constructivist approach acknowledges that audiences will make their own meanings depending on their knowledge and experiences (Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 236). This approach empowers audiences to draw their own conclusions from the presented information (Copeland 2006, 87; Hein 1998, 34; Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 237). Affleck and Kvan (2008, 93) argue that linear interpretation has been replaced by transactional models of interpretation which allow audiences to become active in discussing and creating the information they are viewing. As a result, audiences are provided with the ability to contribute information which enriches future interpretations. Audiences' abilities and freedom to make meaning is unlimited and is not absolute (Hein 2006, 5) as the past experiences of audience members shape the way they relate to the interpreted information or environment. The way the individual interacts with the interpreted information (Saumarez Smith 1989, 19) may be unpredictable as it may bring back memories of another place or experience. Successful interpretation will allow audiences to develop a complex understanding of the past and challenge audiences (Affleck and Kvan 2008, 94; Copeland 2006, 87). Taylor (2006, 102) argues that interpretation strives to help people find their own meaning and values and make sense of the world around them.

As audiences view interpretation from their own perspectives, the presented objectivity, certainty, truth and transparency of the information may be questioned. Basu and McDonald (2007, 6) argue this is a crisis of interpretation, particularly for a positivist approach, however, using the constructivist approach is not a crisis in interpretation, but an acknowledgement of the shared authority between the interpreter and audience. Knox (2008, 259) agrees, arguing that authenticity in interpretation involves the flow of ideas and cultural capital from the interpreter to the audience, rather than relying on the intrinsic meaning of an object or information. It is argued in New Museology theory (Vergo, 1989, 3) that there is no single meaning to any object, as people will layer their own interpretations.

Presenting information within a wider cultural context allows audiences to make a connection based on presented themes and compare the past with the present. This can make the information more significant to audiences as they will understand it within a context, rather than as an isolated piece of information. Framing it within a relatable story is often more memorable to audiences than fact based text as audiences can relate to other people's experiences. If audiences cannot relate to what is being interpreted then they will not engage with it, as Tilden (2007, 34-35) suggests. Storytelling is the hook to entice people into engaging with the presented information, because it is how people make sense of the world (Hannabuss 2000, 360). Storytelling is interactive, promotes active listening and affects the listener (Hannabuss 2000, 361) as the same narrative conventions are used when speaking to others. The presentation of information needs to be meaningful to audiences and should adapt over time to suit changes in culture and audiences. This alleviates dissonance in message content which can occur through contradictory transmission, failure to transmit, obsolete transmission through items which no longer have a discernible meaning, or undesirable transmission (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, 28-29).

### **Presentation of Information**

Using the constructivist approach to interpret historic information or places, audiences are presented with multiple perspectives of the past, often creating many links through different themes. In a museum context, New Museology theory (Vergo, 1989, 3) also promotes multiple interpretations. Presenting multiple perspectives provides the space to tell different stories, alleviating some of the biases which may be present with the positivist approach. Opposing perspectives can be presented to audiences (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, 190) which allow audiences to draw their own conclusions.

Interpretation using a constructivist approach allows audiences to reflect on the past in the context of the present. Layers of history can be highlighted which may not be apparent on an initial view and provide a complexity to place (Hems and Blockley 2006, 4). These layers are particularly important to share and are often where personal stories and memories can be used to engage with audiences. The stories that are chosen and the ways that they highlight the significance of each place will change in their retelling (Hems and Blockley 2006, 1) depending on how it is interpreted and the audience. Interpreters try to make connections that have been lost and try to imagine what life was like through looking at an item from the past

(Pickering 2008, 209). While doing so, they highlight the meaning of the item or place to the people who had a relationship with it so audiences can understand why it was significant. As Taylor (2006, 103) argues, interpretation is never static as the idea of what is historically significant is constantly changing, therefore, many themes can be explored. This freedom from determined meaning results in exhibitions which generate, rather than reproduce knowledge and experience (Basu and McDonald 2007, 2). Saumarez Smith (1989, 19) argues that artefacts change meaning over years through different historiographical and institutional changes, however, as different people view an artefact with their own interpretation its meaning changes more frequently. Interpretative exhibitions are sites of cultural mediation which partly construct what is mediated (Basu and McDonald 2007, 11) using limited and often biased resources from the past. Historical representations, however, should always be questioned on the basis of political, ethical and epistemological reasons (Pickering 2008, 193) because heritage interpretation contains value-laden messages (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996, 27).

To conclude, the social and cultural perspectives contained within oral history methodology link it to place and interpretation as the context for memories. The use of the constructivist approach in interpretation and addressing place through emotional geography complements the exploration of these perspectives within oral history.

## **Chapter 2 – Methodology of oral history and field work in Kalamunda**

This chapter analyses the methodology of conducting the oral history interviews in Kalamunda in relation to the literature on oral history, place and interpretation as discussed in the previous chapter. I briefly discuss the history of oral history and further critique oral history methodology from the previous chapter. The analysis of the interviews I conducted will begin to investigate the use of oral history to record the cultural events of place in interpretation. This will be explored further in the following chapters.

### **Further critique of oral history methodology**

As discussed in the previous chapter, oral history became a formal research methodology during the twentieth century. As politics and culture became radicalised in the 1960s and 1970s practitioners used oral history to include marginalised groups:

Oral histories of particular social groups, or of historical themes such as childhood or sex education, have often been associated with popular radicalism and applied more to subordinated or marginalised social groups either because these have been written out of history in the upper case, or hidden from it because of its assumptions of what is historically of significance and value. This has opened up history considerably and to some extent democratised it, producing many valuable accounts that would otherwise have gone unmade and unheard, but oral history is certainly not confined to any particular research objectives and can be very widely adopted. (Pickering 2008, 207)

Thompson (2000, 2 and 65-68) agrees with Pickering, noting its use to provide new insights. As Pickering notes in the quote above, oral history can be used for many different research projects. Its adaptability for use in different types of projects and its use to provide different perspectives of the past have been invaluable for the development of social history.

As Pickering notes, oral history has produced accounts which would have gone unheard. Other writers such as Grele and O'Farrell, however, have been critical of this argument. They suggest it is used as any other research methodology available to understand the past. O'Farrell, is also critical of oral history, because it is based on the recall of memories, but acknowledges its use in historical methodology. The main point he makes is that



As with other types of historical source, the basic questions about oral testimony relate to how it is tested and used, and the degree to which it is relied on. No sensible historian should ignore it, if it is available – nor (and here is the difficulty with the work in present view) rely on it entirely or even primarily. (O'Farrell 1979, 3 - 4)

While O'Farrell critiques oral history methodology and the sole reliance on it for information about the past, I do not consider that it suggests O'Farrell is opposed to the use of oral history. During the twentieth century historians have been mistrusting of oral history because it was based on memory which they viewed as data which could not be verified (Abrams 2010, 5), however, information can be verified with other documentary sources. As noted in the previous chapter, oral history methodology has become entrenched in historical methodology and is one of many sources of data about the past. It is a methodology which draws on other disciplines to interpret the data it creates, such as linguistics and has developed distinctive practices over the time it was widely developed from the 1960s (Abrams 2010, 32). The current exploration by writers of oral history's role as a record of cultural information and the meanings people make of place is an aspect which is important to explore and this exegesis will do so in the following chapters.

### **My position on oral history**

Oral history is a methodology which has a place within historical methodology and can record information from a social point of view through a first-hand account. I agree with writers who caution against its sole use in understanding the past, such as O'Farrell, as it provides one point of view and should be used in conjunction with other sources. Conducting the oral history interviews for this exegesis I found that they mostly consisted of factual information. This counteracts the criticisms of oral history as being predominantly subjective. I suggest that it is an effective methodology to express the personal within place or within an interpretative context. Sharing memories of the past in this way connects the past and the present through person to person contact.

### **Methodology of my interviews**

Formulating interview questions for qualitative research requires an understanding of the research question or topic and what information is needed to answer it through investigating existing literature (Warren 2001, 86). Rubin and Rubin (2005, 153) suggest that one main question is formed for each piece of information

required to answer the research question. Interviews are usually semi structured (Kvale 2007, 65) which allow the interviewer to follow up on topics as they arise. The main questions provide information on the interviewee's experiences related to the theme of the interview (Rubin and Rubin 2005, 152). The same set of questions can be asked of all interviewees, as in this exegesis, which can be used to form comparisons and establish themes (Warren 2001, 85). As the interview progresses the interviewer asks follow up questions so the interviewee can provide additional information on relevant topics (Kvale 2007, 60). These questions also give a better understanding of the interviewee (Rubin and Rubin 2005, 152) and what they find important to include in their interview. Probing questions are asked to clarify points in the narrative (Kvale 2007, 61), ask the interviewee's opinion on their experiences and manage the interview in order for it to stay on the topic (Rubin and Rubin 2005, 164). As the interviewer asks follow up questions and probes the interviewee on their recollections they guide the interviewee to answer their research question.

Robertson (2006, 24) suggests orientating questions such as the interviewee's date of birth, place of birth and details of their parents are useful to start the interview. These questions give the interviewee's personal context which is important to know as it shapes the information they provide. Each interviewee's personal details also placed them within the context of the Kalamunda community. This contextual information was particularly useful to group the interviewees into age brackets to compare their responses and illustrate the points in this exegesis. In order to answer the research question I formulated questions about the interviewee's relationship with the place and their memories of it. The questions about Kalamunda provided information on the built environment, the people and community groups which the interviewee may have interacted with or remembered. I used research as well as conversations with members of the community to ask questions about Kalamunda's former train service and the interviewee's frequency of travel to Perth. Knowing there are many migrants living in Kalamunda I included a question about arriving in Australia and choosing to settle in Kalamunda. Questions were omitted when they did not apply to the person as established in the pre-interview. I anticipated responses which revealed Kalamunda's social history, the interviewee's memories of changes which have occurred and the interviewee's feelings about these changes, and about the interviewee's sense of place. Each of these aspects assists to interpret Kalamunda, therefore understanding how oral history can be used in this way.

Fifteen interviews were conducted with seventeen people aged, at the time, from 44 to 95. Breaking down the number of people in each age group, there were two people aged between 40-50, three people aged between 50-60, six people aged between 60-70, three people aged between 70-80 and three people aged between 90 and 100. To source interviewees an article was published in the local newspapers about the oral history project asking for volunteers to be interviewed. These articles are included in the appendix. I believed that this was a method which would provide a wide cross section of the community and a method where I was not influencing who was interviewed. I received ten responses to the article, however, not all the people were interviewed. Some of the respondents did not provide their contact details and were going to contact me at a later date which did not occur, while two respondents were happy to discuss their story and my project but did not want to be interviewed. As I live in Kalamunda, there were a few people I knew as acquaintances who I approached to interview. Other interviewees were suggested to me by people I knew. This connection, while of benefit to gaining the trust of interviewees, had the effect of gathering people from the same socio-economic and cultural group which influenced the types of responses.

On reflection, many interviewees provided more factual information such as the locations of businesses and business owners, rather than anecdotes about these people and the place. This may have been due to the nature of the project and framing of the questions, or the relationship between interviewer and interviewee as discussed in the previous chapter. Some interviewees were very keen to discuss an important aspect of their life or family. For example Agnes Taylor spoke about her father and wanted his story and contribution to the building of a church to be told. This may have been because she felt his work has not been recognised in the community. Contributing her oral history provided an avenue for this information to be recorded.

The large range of ages provided the opportunity to compare responses between different age groups. I explored whether there were differences in how people felt about Kalamunda and explored the changes which occurred to the cultural landscape. There were many common responses regarding sense of place and feeling a sense of belonging to a tight knit community over the fifty years as represented by the ages of the interviewees.

All interviewees signed an information sheet acknowledging their involvement in the project and a consent form for their interview. One interviewee requested that her name was not mentioned in the transcript which was an option I gave interviewees on their consent form.

### **Methodology of literature in relation to my interviews**

Using the main points raised in the previous chapter, this section addresses how oral history methodology, emotional geography of place and the constructivist approach to interpretation are linked through the framework of the interviews I conducted.

Oral history can be used to highlight multiple perspectives of place which can be used to explore place's identity and how it has developed. Interviewing people of different ages was an easy way to demonstrate this as activities and the cultural landscape of Kalamunda changed over time. It was within age groups that the multiple perspectives could be seen more clearly, for example people's associations with places and their sense of place. Representing these multiple perspectives of place through interpretation provides an insight into people's sense of place and how they moved around a place. Mapping these places of meaning would provide a powerful layer of interpretation of place. These memories can then be used in conjunction with other sources, to create an understanding of the past and demonstrate how that place has changed. Using oral history in the constructivist approach to interpretation, the experiences from the past can be expressed through the memory of someone who was there. These can be juxtaposed with another view to provide audiences with a complex view of the past. This enables audiences to understand place better and its issues through the knowledge of an insider. The interviewees provided views that I had not considered, even as an insider, and information on places that do not have a physical trace in the present. The uncovering of information is an important aspect of oral history and highlights the value of this methodology.

Listening to the responses I, as the interviewer, was able to be drawn into the memories and view Kalamunda with a different perspective. As mentioned in the previous chapter, remembering events and places produces an emotional response from the audience as well as the interviewee. These memories were predominantly positive and often related to childhood activities. Some interviewees reflected on their anecdotes, noting that things were different in the present, sometimes in a

positive way, sometimes in a negative way. Listening to the interviews and hearing the laughter of the interviewee recalling a memory brings immediacy to the audience which is not apparent when reading the transcript. When reading the transcript audiences are removed from the interviewee and are reading with individual voices, rather than the interviewee's. The voice, its delivery and the memory of the interviewee are all contained within the aural version of the interview. These aspects provide a context to the information recalled. Using this version in interpretation, the story is more likely to provide an emotive response with audiences.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the dynamics between interviewee and interviewer are directly related to the content of the interview. I shared my relationship with Kalamunda with interviewees in the pre-interview meeting as I engaged their trust. One of the disadvantages of this was that interviewees spoke as insiders, rather than explain locations of businesses, or would relate the former locations of businesses in the town centre with the present business in that location. Often interviewees would also assume that I had knowledge of local personalities and gave an opinion or comment on the person, rather than providing a full explanation. Due to the age difference between myself and the interviewees, many times I asked for, or was provided with, a more detailed explanation of a location or event due to my lack of knowledge. Talking to an interviewer who is also an insider may have altered the interview content as interviewees may not have wanted to share some information knowing I also had knowledge of people in the community.

Interviewing a group of people representing a large age range and interests has provided a base for an examination of the qualitative information. Quantitatively, fifteen interviews could be viewed as not representative enough of the Kalamunda community, however, I suggest that qualitatively the people who were interviewed have provided a representative sample and their different views of the past are of benefit to my research. When comparing the interview content of people in the same age group there were consistencies which indicate that they were representative of many people's experiences and lives in Kalamunda at that time. This was particularly apparent in the older age groups as many interviewees had spent most of their childhood and adolescent years in Kalamunda. These consistencies included the activities the interviewees participated in such as organised community or church groups and sporting activities. Many interviewees recalled the same people when asked about local identities, indicating that person's

role or influence in the community. As a group, the interviews across the different age groups provided a representation of the past from many points of view which provided a layered view of Kalamunda. Many interviewees talked about their sense of place which represents aspects of how Kalamunda is portrayed such as the importance of nature, history and feeling of community.

As people talk to one another everything that is said is weighed and evaluated for its reliability. As I listened, everything the interviewees said seemed reliable to me based on my own knowledge and other interviewee's responses. As mentioned previously many interviewees recalled the same people and locations in a factual manner and they were not expressing an opinion or anecdote about them. This information can be compared to other sources of information such as newspaper advertisements, property records and photographs and supports the argument of Hoffman (1996) and Lummis (2006) regarding the reliability of oral history.

The interpretation of the past, as recalled in memory, can change over time as new information emerges which creates links between themes. The use of oral history in interpretation to understand place through recording places of meaning celebrates the subjectivity of the information within oral history. Interviews are collected in part to provide factual information on places and how they have changed but also to provide the intangible, the stories of that place and why it is important to the interviewee. The following chapters will explore these topics in greater detail.

### **Chapter 3 – Oral history methodology communicates aspects of the past and connection to place**

Oral history records memories of people and place and the interactions or linkages between them. Through oral history the cultural and social perspectives provide a different sense of place than is perhaps physically visible or apparent in the present cultural landscape. The chapter explores this through emotional geography, sense of place, meaning in place and identity. Through these topics the exegesis will examine how oral history methodology is used to understand what information about place is recorded in oral history. Excerpts from the oral history interviews I conducted will illustrate this.

#### **Emotional geography**

“Emotions are intimately tied to a place” (Urry 2007, 77) as memories link people back to a time and events which occurred in a particular place. Oral history records this and shares it with other people. As discussed in chapter one, emotional geography records the relationship between people and a geographical location (Smith, Davidson, Cameron and Bondi 2009, 4). Interviewees discussed their feelings towards Kalamunda. Interviewees noted “I always liked the hills” (Ida Smith, 2011) and “you’d walk around and you’d know everybody and you’d be friendly with everybody” (Lewis, 2011). Home was mentioned by Ailsa Harwood (2011) and Aneeta and Michael Huntley (2012), as well as Pauline Young.

well its home to me and I’m sure I’ll always feel like this til my life’s end. I love the trees and bush and the orchards and the city views with the river and the ocean in the distance. (Young, 2011)

Other interviewees such as Laurie Bechelli and Jill Farrant noted the village and rural feel to the area which they both enjoy.

you’ve still got that village feel to Kalamunda...I like how it’s a little bit of both, it’s a little bit of country and a little bit of city and if you need the city it’s only really half an hour away. (Bechelli, 2011)

I think because it is in the hills makes it special...I mean you hear a lot of people say if you’re going to live in Perth you should only live in the hills or on the coast because there’s nothing in between... So I think it’s the fact that it’s on the hills there still, because a lot of it’s been kept special rural, especially around here, there’s still nice size blocks where you can still have a few, you know, animals, livestock if you want, chooks. And although it’s changed a lot...you just feel like

you've left the city behind as you start to head up the hill. That's the feeling I get. (Farrant, 2011)

These feelings have contributed to the continued residence of some of the interviewees. Most of the interviewees who expressed an emotional connection with the place and who still lived in Kalamunda had lived there for a long time and adapted to the changes which have occurred.

The emotions associated with the memory and meaning of place remains with the person and affect the relationship between the person and place for years after the time of the event. For example Elaine Sargent (2012) still recalled the embarrassment of being driven to school when she was seven:

No way did I want to be seen arriving in a car, you just didn't [get driven to school], it was unheard of. But not only did Dad drive me to school, he drove right across the school grounds to my classroom and all the kids were staring. They'd never seen a car coming [into the playground], [so they] were just staring [at me] and I was so embarrassed. Instead of being grateful I was slinking out of the car and going to class. I was only about seven (7), but dad was trying to do me a favour but kids don't want to be different.

Sometimes all that is recalled about a place is its atmosphere rather than details of its physical elements (Champion and Dave, 2007, 336) or the smell, sounds or small details of what was observed. As all the senses are used when experiencing place (Hayden 1995, 18) they are often the catalyst to the recollection or are the strongest part of the memory (Ahmed 2004, 7). These senses are embedded in the memory of place and are part of the meaning a person associates with it.

Now, Kalamunda seems like a lovely fresh place, and it is, but a few years ago I was out [near] Lake Eyre and all of a sudden I said, '[can you] smell that' and everyone said, 'what are you talking about?' I said, 'this smell. This is the Kalamunda of my childhood, this smell'. The fresh air had a special smell. It took me back to my childhood: it was the same fresh [scent] that I didn't even realise I [hadn't experienced for years]. I said, 'this is [a] Kalamunda smell', and it was only fresh air; and as the population's increased, the air is still pretty clear but it hasn't got that lovely fresh [air it had back then]. So I didn't even know air had a smell. (Sargent, 2012)

I've got passionate (laughs) memories about that place, every Friday when I was going to school we had a pie for lunch and mum used to have a permanent order there. And I'd fly home from school and up and pick up the pies, but oh I've never tasted pies like them, (laughs) they were beautiful. (Harwood, 2011)



## **Sense of place**

The formation of a sense of place is an important element of defining the cultural landscape into specific places which have meaning to people. Memory and life stories are valuable sources of information on place and social history as they contain factual information about geographical features and as well as their meaning and significance. Understanding place combines the physical landscape with the intangible elements that people associate with it. The interviewees expressed their sense of place in connection to their deep understanding of the physical environment, connection with people and a sense of belonging to the community or a combination of all of these elements as Robertson (2009, 154) outlines. For example:

The weather's wonderful, love it; love the hills, the air's fresh and it is just that far enough away from the hurley burley. Getting a little bit hurley burley on Thursday mornings and Fridays up there but generally speaking it's not really. (Warburton, 2013)

No, the open air the fresh air here, you look over the smoke of, you know when you're on the hill and you look over Perth and sometimes you see all this smog over it. You think hmm that's not very healthy (laughs). I think we live in quite a good spot. (interviewee, 2013)

The statements made by interviewees relating to feelings of home and belonging came from their sense of belonging to a close knit community as well as the connection to the landscape. Their statements support Relph's (1976, 38) assertion that sense of place and attachment create a sense of security to look out from towards a changing world. Even after moving away interviewees such as Paul Lewis and Aneeta Huntley, who later returned for family reasons, felt a sense of place. In contrast Elaine Sargent highlighted the distinctions between the past and the present. She recalled the community atmosphere of Kalamunda which existed in the past made Kalamunda special stated that now

you can go up the street and not know anyone. It hasn't got that lovely village feel it used to have...[There were some] lovely old buildings [along there and they should've retained some]. All [the character] is rapidly going and it's [becoming] like any other [suburb]. It used to have a [rustic] uniqueness and they're just not being appreciated by keeping it, retaining the character. Also, as the pine trees die along Canning Road... where they die they're replacing them with Eucalypts. I think they should have replaced them with pines, because that's our history...(Sargent, 2012)

Her sense of place which was tied to the community has been lost due to the changes which have occurred. Other interviewees noted that they had felt an attachment in the past but they did not continue to live in the area as it had changed too much and they had found another place which met their needs.

All of the interviewees spoke about the particularities of Kalamunda such as its landscape and social elements which make it distinctive from other places. Their comments indicate that they perceive Kalamunda as other to a suburban environment, with the bush contributing to its rural or country feel. For example “we do lots of bush walking; so, yeah, love the bush especially in winter. We go bush walking all the time.” (Bechelli 2011). Other interviewees commented that

It's different to suburbs, it has a village community feel; to me whether it's because we live here and you know all the parts of it. Other suburbs don't seem to have that, perhaps it's because (laughs) we don't know it but to me it's different than other areas. (Harwood, 2011)

I guess what is attractive about Kalamunda to a lot of people is the village atmosphere and that, as you would know, is based very much on Haynes Street and that streetscape rather than just a great big shopping centre like most suburbs have now. (Maher, 2013)

I could not live in a town anymore; you know where there are lots and lots of people. Here you have freedom, it's very peaceful and yah the whole atmosphere; things have changed a lot. (interviewee 2013)

described it as: peaceful. It's different now than what it was because it was very close knit. Oh, it's very pretty I just love it and when I retire I'll probably go up there too. (Kerr, 2011)

Many interviewees also spoke about their involvement with local groups or sports clubs such as football, tennis, cricket and basketball. These memories contribute to an understanding of the social and cultural context of the time. Some interviewees such as Neil Pember contributed to local services such as the fire brigade which was an important part of life at the time and of belonging to the community, while other interviewees were involved in church activities. Interviewees also mentioned community events including weekly movie screenings at the Agricultural Hall and the annual Kalamunda Show. The responses demonstrated the different ways people expressed their sense of place through the activities and groups they were involved in and their associated social networks. The locations associated with activities or particular people trigger memories of a particular place and time. Hayden (1995, 46) argues that these memories of place enable people to connect with the

elements of the cultural landscape. For example people they interacted with such as business owners or neighbours; and how the community came together for special events or social activities.

Byrne (2009, 235) argues that the meaning attached to specific places and landscapes by individuals is unknown to outsiders. It is an intangible layer of significance on a physical place. Neil Pember recalls a special place from his childhood

Kalamunda in the summertime we would walk down to Rocky Pool and go for a swim. Rocky Pool is right down the end of Spring Road, but it's about another kilometre further down...And in those days it was just a very rough bush track and we used to call it Snake Gully because there's a lot of snakes (laughs) along it and the damn track was only a foot track; but all us kids used to go down there barefoot and think nothing of it. (Pember, 2011)

The memories of using this swimming place are particular to those who grew up at that time. People outside the community can have a perception of a place based on their observations and experiences when visiting. They do not, however, have an appreciation of the past which is present in the cultural landscape or of special places which are valued by individuals or the community as the quote above demonstrates. A visitor to Kalamunda observed to me, however, that it felt like a community rather than a suburb. I suggest this is due to the landscape of the town centre which is similar to a country town, and not dominated by a large shopping centre or major traffic thoroughfares. It could also be due to the associations they made between it and other places they have experienced and, as Massey (1994, 153) notes, link one place to another. Hayden (1995, 46) argues that place memory can represent shared pasts to people without the intimate connection to a particular place.

Many interviewees recalled business owners as people of prominence in the community. Milton Stove, one of the two local butchers, was mentioned by many interviewees as one of the memorable people in the community. For example Ida Smith and Nicki de Hoog (2011)

And this was Stove's and this was Bavistock's butchers, that's right and you had to go to both of them or they'd get offended (laughs). You had to go one, one week- (NdH) Isn't that hilarious, two (2) butchers in one tiny town.

The memories of Kalamunda as recalled in the oral history interviews highlighted a layer of its history and revealed parts of the landscape which have been removed or changed. Using the information contained in the interview, the landscape can be interpreted, noting businesses' previous locations, the original use of buildings and the social activities which occurred such as the weekly movies.

### **Meaning in place**

Place is the location of meaning which is emotive and linked to memories (Kabachnik 2012, 213) associated with a person or event. Memories recall these moments of a particular time and place within a person's life which have meaning to them. When places are revisited, either physically or cognitively, the lived historical experience recalled through memory is the source of their specificity (Radstone, 2000, 11). One particular place which had meaning for many interviewees was the

...Kookaburra Tea Rooms, that's on the corner of Haynes Street, and all the kids and all the teenagers used to go there for milkshakes. I remember when I was a teenager we always used to go in there, everybody, all the youngsters would all meet at the Kookaburra. That was the meeting place. (Pember, 2011)

Wesley Earp also recalled the popularity of the place

...the Kookaburra Tea Rooms were on the corner. That's where all the kids used to hang out there... It was a very popular spot.

This place was important during interviewee's teenage years as a location to socialise away from adults. Jill Farrant (2011) recalled that parents in the mid 1960s, including her own, did not like their daughters going to the Kookaburra often as "some of the older boys who could drive and were a bit lairy, hung around." During Wesley Earp's early working life he recalled

You know we were able to go down to the Kookaburra and book up milkshakes and had a running account there and we could pay Mary McInerney the money when it was due at each pay day. (Earp, 2011)

Other interviewees remembered the Kookaburra Tea Rooms as a delicatessen, although it is unclear whether this is due to the change of use or a difference in how interviewees remembered the place. Jill's recollection alluded to the feelings which parents had about the place which may reflect their attitudes to the changes in society during the 1960s.

The site of the Kookaburra Tea Rooms has become another business premises, but people who remember it could still mark its location. Memories link people and place and as Darian-Smith (1994, 1) observed places which had an impact on people remain vivid in their memory. These memories can be compared to the cultural landscape of the present which is a useful interpretative tool. An example of this is a memoryscape which Butler (2011, 213) states can intensify people's feeling of connection with place, even when they have an established link with it. Memoryscapes use memories of place to highlight layers of social and cultural information. As Andrews *et al.* (2006, 170) state, oral histories record information on specific places and how people used them, as well as the recollection of the past in the landscape of the present. This technique is particularly useful for interpreting changes in the cultural landscape. Knowing more about a particular place's history and meaning makes it stand apart from the rest of the landscape, as its continuity of use is known.

A place may have the same types of buildings or businesses as other places, however, it is the memories which are evoked by being in the place they are associated with that makes it distinct from other places. For example memories associated with the Kalamunda Hotel

well I do remember dad used to go to the hotel on a Friday night, I think, obviously pay night, and we'd sit out the front cos you weren't allowed in and we used to just play there with my siblings. That was good fun. (Kerr, 2011)

we used to, where the pub is now, there was, where they got the alfresco and all that was all just footpath. The columns are still there...and dad used to drive through that footpath and deliver the paper so it wouldn't get pinched, so that's how long ago that was. (Huntley, 2012)

These memories create a collective sense of the past as different people in the community remember participating in the same activities or particular events. Without the social connection people bring to place, it does not have any significance. Augé (1995, 78) describes places without historical and social connections as non-places. When looking at these memories collectively, as well as the cultural landscape, they highlight the distinctive aspects of a place (Read 1996, 2). Recording the meanings of physical place and events through oral history empowers everyone to add their story. As physical places are being redeveloped

the artefacts, history, photos and stories emerge. These historical elements are then layered with the stories and meanings. De Certeau (1984, 108) states that memories of place consist of the “the invisible identities of the visible” which recall a person or building, from the past. He argues that place is comprised of these layers and fragments of knowledge which are held by different individuals. The acknowledgement of the layers of history and their meanings are important for sense of place and the preservation and acknowledgement of tangible heritage.

## **Identity**

The relationship between a community’s identity and place is very important as they are dependent on each other to reinforce identity and to create meaning. Recording memory through oral history is a key part of retaining a community’s continuity and sense of place and expressing the identity of place. The spaces and connections link sites and built fabric with intangible heritage in the form of memories and stories (Prinsen 2013, 79). The identity of place also attracts new people to it who feel that they will fit within it. Nicki de Hoog and Ida Smith (2011) remembered

the thing about Kalamunda, I think, you know how some towns just gather around a certain element in society, well, it was almost like, a lot of those people were mad artists and sort of slightly renegade kind of people but people who wanted somewhere quiet, and it was a very creative place. It was like, there were all these famous artists who lived around about, in their early years. So there were painters and musicians, and very often they were migrant families and it was their children then, who went on to become very good musicians, writers, painters etc. But it was a very creative community.

Kalamunda is still a place where many artists and crafts-people live and work and this sub-community is present in the wider community through galleries and markets. The art community has a reciprocal relationship with the place, as it is a quiet environment conducive to the arts. Due to this association Kalamunda is still perceived as an artistic community. The identity of Kalamunda, as Massey (1994, 5) argues, is not fixed and many people in the community are part of different sub-communities such as sport or particular interest groups. The groups associated with place are all attached to it through their different activities and associations (Jetson 2009, 14) and contribute to the creation of a vibrant community.

Memory is a key part of an individual’s identity and sense of self (Green, 2008, 83). It is the place where lived experiences and personal interactions are stored. Hawke (2010, 1334) argues that identity is linked with place through a feeling of “inside-

ness", belonging, knowing and being known in the community. As people's identity is linked with place and its distinctiveness, this link can be observed when they interact with others (Hawke 2010, 1333). This intangible connection is often only discernible when a person has left the place or when someone arrives at a place for the first time. The interviewees identified with the culture and history of place, its landscape, are proud of where they live, have a sense of belonging to the place and have a place within the community. Hawke (2010, 1333) argues that place is linked with a person's identity through continuity across time, self-esteem, self-worth and distinctiveness. People's experiences shape the landscape and the landscape shapes the people who live in it (Prinsen 2013, 79). Individual memories go beyond the individual when they recall everyday social or cultural relationships (Keightley 2008, 176). Their memories contribute to a collective memory of that time and place which includes the meaning of the place for those people.

Oral history methodology communicates the emotional ties people have with place and places of meaning which contribute to community identity and sense of place. The interviewees celebrated the aspects of Kalamunda which have made it distinctive. Some interviewees expressed their concerns at the changes which have occurred, compared to the physical landscape and community of the past. Recording the intangible elements of place through oral history is the result of an increasing emphasis on recording multiple perspectives and social history of place. The interviews provided information which can be used to interpret the social and physical environment, as well as an understanding of everyday life. Memory provides this layer of information and association which turns a physical location into a place of significance.

## **Chapter 4 – oral history records the everyday and particularities of place, retaining meaning**

As people talk about their life and associations with place, the intricate connections between identity, place and memory emerge. These connections were discussed in detail in the previous chapter. When interpreting place the details of the everyday activities and the intersection of sites of meaning are also important to highlight a place's social history. My position is that oral history remains relevant and its use has increased in recent years as it is used to celebrate the identity of place in a globalised world. This chapter explores how oral history retains meaning of the everyday and particularities of place through multiple layers of meaning and intersections of places of meaning, and its role to record memories in the twenty first century. These topics were illustrated using excerpts from the oral history interviews I conducted for this exegesis.

### **The everyday and particularities of place**

The everyday is the ordinary, the details which become unseen in daily life. It is the context to lives which is recalled in memory as the location of an event or defines daily activity which is so commonplace that it is disregarded. Lefebvre (2010, 18) argues that the key characteristic of the everyday is its recurrence and apparent permanence as acted through people's set routines. The nature of the everyday is to be part of the subconscious mind and it is not until a person recalls elements of it, for example in an oral history interview that it comes to the conscious mind. Highmore (2010, 1) defines the everyday as "the accumulation of 'small things' that constitute a more expansive but hard to register 'big thing'." The big thing for this exegesis is the understanding of the social and cultural heritage of place. The memory of a culture exists in the stories told and everyday practices (de Certeau 1984, 24). Recording memory about the everyday provides an understanding of the details of people's lives and place which are useful when addressing its social history or changes over time.

Moran (2004, 66) adds to the definition of the everyday, stating it is where the past meets the present. This occurs in the everyday talk between people as they talk about the past and the present (Johnson and Dawson 1998, 77). As this information is exchanged individuals understand the physical landscape and social history better which adds to their sense of place. Reflecting on memories of the everyday,



changes in activities and ways of life are apparent and they can be compared with the present. For example Elaine Sargent (2012) recalled that when she was growing up Monday was washing day:

...when the mums were hanging out the clothes [up the back], they always had a yak [across the back yard fence] to each other and they all knew what [the latest] gossip was going [on and] it was always passed around (laughs)... So Monday was always washing day, as I said, and people had long lines stretching across the backyards from tree to tree and these were held up by long wooden props.

This memory holds a lot of information about the everyday, the communal nature of this task and talking to neighbours. It also details the landscape of backyards that can be compared to the present. All of these aspects contribute to the recording of its social and cultural context and to a sense of place. Reflecting on this memory highlights how everyday tasks are carried out differently in the present and how the nature of community has changed. In the future this information will be invaluable to understanding everyday life (Bednasek 2009, 53).

The particularities of place are expressed through emotional geography and are a combination of the physical environment, the social history of people and the context of the everyday. Places are integral to identity formation and contain centres of meaning, memory and emotion (Kabachnik 2010, 199). Many writers including Passerini (1998), Shopes (2006) and Robertson (2009) have noted that oral history records memories about the details of the buildings, streetscapes or people in place; as well as people's associations with that place. Massey (1994, 5) argues that the particularity of place is constructed through the links and interconnections to places beyond it. This idea is based on the comparison between places so that differences can be determined. The memories recorded in oral history assist to understand these differences and how they contribute to sense of place. The information leads to a richer layering of its social history as memories about uses of sites and places of significance are revealed. A place goes from being ordinary to being distinctive once its particularities are understood (Read 1996, 197). This is easy for people with a relationship to place through an emotional connection and places of meaning as outlined in chapter three. Expressing the distinct elements of place to people who do not have a connection to place is where the use of oral history in interpretation is beneficial. Yuhua (2009, 412) notes that oral history provides a link between an individual's story and the wider social context.

All interviewees provided memories which were attached to particular sites. Johnson (2012, 831) states that “events, remembered attached to a place, forever alter the memory of that place.” Paul Lewis (2011), for example, recalled catching the school bus on Railway Road in Kalamunda

when we did catch the bus it used to be at the top of where the Kalamunda Museum is now, or the Kalamunda History Village, and there used to be a whole lot of pine trees that used to be there and we used to climb them in the morning before we'd catch the bus. You know, we'd be climbing the trees while waiting for the bus. They've now unfortunately, I think they've taken a lot of those pine trees down.

The site is layered with memories and associations related to the everyday occurrence of catching a school bus. The pine trees mentioned are a significant feature in Kalamunda's history and landscape. The memory of climbing the trees is so strong that many decades later their loss is mourned but they continue to be recalled, so remaining at the place. Many other people recall the trees as they were located on the route from the train station to the businesses located nearby, which included the Kalamunda Hotel and guest houses. Agnes Taylor (2011) recalled the same area and the changes which occurred in the late twentieth century.

there were lots of boarding houses; you know you'd have them in for a couple of days or weekends, and so on like that. It was mainly a health resort in those days; it is hard to imagine it now. Where that wretched Coles is now that was lovely bush and so on and there were four (4) hostels there... St Elmo was one of them.

Her recollection identifies one of the particularities of Kalamunda's development as a health resort and holiday place from Perth and provides another layer of memory. This part of the locality's history is still evident in the built environment and social history, as many residents can still remember people arriving by train to stay in Kalamunda. Even in the present day, there are many bed and breakfast accommodation facilities, continuing this aspect of history. Her memory also recalls her feelings towards the changes in the landscape.

As the community and its environment change, information on sites of significance within place will become more important as a reference point to the past. The current physical landscape can be compared to people's memories of place. When understanding place, the social significance is not apparent unless stories are told that reveal memories and places which are valued by the community. Information

on the everyday and places which had meaning in everyday life is the information most at risk of being lost in a changing environment.

### **Multiple layers of meaning and intersections of places of meaning**

Capturing many people's memories through oral history provides a diverse picture of the community at different times. As people have different experiences and associations with place there will be overlapping sites of significance. The multiple layers of memory form layers of meaning in place and connections between people when they intersect. These memories can be compared, providing different viewpoints on one place or event to provide an understanding of place. The stories also recall the spaces where people interact and the intersections of the elements which place comprises (de Certeau 1984, 117). To illustrate this, interviewees recalled the different uses of a building in central Kalamunda over time.

I got married in a church in Central Road in 1960 which is now KADS [Kalamunda Dramatic Society] Theatre and it went from, just after I got married...because it went to KADS Theatre. They put like a lean to on the side of it for the ambulance and it went to the ambulance hall before the KADS Theatre and my parents used to drive the ambulance and often you had to go to Perth, or St John of God's in Belmont which is no more. (Pember, 2011)

where the KADS (Kalamunda Dramatic Society) dramatic hall is, that used to be the St Barnabas [Anglican] Church. There used to be a huge bell, [in Barber] Street, where the town square is [now]. Half an hour before the church [service was due to] start Mr and Mrs Wright, [who] were [also] the school cleaners [and] who lived in a little house where the Jack Healey Centre is now, [would walk across] and dong the bell, dong, and about ten (10) minutes later you'd just see everyone coming out of their houses, walking to church. (Sargent, 2012)

These memories also contribute to the development of a wider understanding of the place's social history and culture. It is important to represent the memories of different people as they may not have been shared before (Field 2008, 117). The memories about the many uses of the building can be linked to provide an understanding of its significance to the community and social context.

Kostera Oval is another example as a site of significance in the Kalamunda community. Depending on the person's age, the oval has been known as the recreation ground or the rec, Kalamunda Oval and Kostera Oval. The oval was originally gravel, but was turfed by members of the community. It has been, and

continues to be, the location of local football and cricket games and the Kalamunda Show. Multiple interviewees, as shown in the following examples, mentioned the oval and their memories of activities held there.

They used to have the log chops and they used to have those little cars, you used to whip around the outside of the oval, it was all dirt, they were little racing cars. (Earp, 2011)

The Koster Oval used to just be called the Recreation Ground and that had a picket fence around it. On show days they had a gymkhana once a year and the Kalamunda Show; but my brother and I were very naughty, we didn't want to spend money going in so we'd sneak around the back where there was a bit of fence broken and we'd get in that way and spend that money at the Show. [It was a] terrible thing to do, but mum's not here to know all about these little escapades. (Sargent, 2012)

When I was in high school we joined, there was a club called Cats Basketball Club. You used to have two (2) basketball courts that used to be in Kalamunda next to the oval where the cricket club and the footy club so we used to play; I think it was Friday night. So basketball was a big scene, a big social scene and you'd get together. All the girls'd be there and all the guys'd be there so you you'd be mixing with the guys and the girls and we joined a big club. (Lewis, 2011)

From there the Kalamunda Tennis Club moved to Recreation Road at the back of the oval. I think it's now the Lapidary Club...I think we put down four (4) [courts] and it was all voluntary; all the tennis club people put them down and the Shire provided the bitumen. (Pember, 2011)

You know Kalamunda High had its elements. There was the rough crowd, a lot of fights in those days down the back of the oval. (Bechelli, 2011)

Yeah, that was all gravel and the oval was, which you've probably been told already, gravel. They used to have bike racing; I don't know why there was bike racing around there, and the oval was a lot smaller so if you take in. Probably about ten (10) metres of that was all gravel around the outside of the footy oval, and you just walked down. There was no steps there, you just walked down the gravel banks and all that sort of thing... Where they park their cars behind the footy club, that used to be the basketball courts. (Huntley, 2012)

These memories span from the 1950s to 1970s have meaning beyond the memory of the use of the oval. They are predominantly memories from late childhood and adolescence when the oval was an important place for socialising away from adults, or a location of retreat for antisocial behavior for certain groups. The memories also highlight the importance of sport to the youth of the community.

Comparing people's memories highlights the connections between people who may not know each other, but have had similar experiences. This contributes to an understanding of place, its social history and multiple identities (Relph, 1976, 26). While most places contain a dominant collective identity, there may also be dual identities, or identities in conflict within place which can be highlighted through oral history. Shea (2010, 301) argues that through oral history, multiple identities and sites of significance can be recorded which can assist in overcoming differences in views. In a place like Kalamunda it seems that there is a dominant collective identity, however, there are many migrant groups that may not be fully represented in the collective identity. There are always different stories and identities connected to sites of meaning that may not be apparent, but may become known through recording oral history (Field 2008, 111). Recording memories can demonstrate that some experiences are very similar between groups.

### **Recording memories in the twenty-first century**

During the twentieth century and continuing into the twenty-first century there has been a resurgence in the recognition of the importance of place and identity and how these are connected at sites of significance (Jardine Brown 2012; Prinsen 2013; Read 1996). It could be argued that a sense of nostalgia is the impetus for this trend, however, my position is that as the physical landscape and population of a place changes, it becomes more important to understand and to communicate those changes as discussed in the previous chapter. The changes in Kalamunda's cultural landscape can be understood when comparing the interviewees' responses below. Many interviewees have lived in the area for an extended period of time and their memories of the past are invaluable to provide a context to the present cultural landscape. In addition Dayton-Wood *et al.* (2012, 77) also notes oral history records cultural practices which are important to the community. Ailsa Harwood (2011) recalled Kalamunda from her childhood

the town centre, where all the shops and that were, and just beyond [its] perimeter was mainly bush just over the railway line and down by the school and we had some pretty nasty bushfires in those days too because the bush was so close to town.

[Kalamunda was]...a country town...it was mostly gravel roads other than in the town area. And the town in those days was primarily at the top of Haynes Street in Railway Road, where the hotel is. (Pember, 2011)

I also remember Rhodes and Underwood's, a little shop you could go into there which is where the Commonwealth Bank is now. In a lot of ways it's changed greatly but I was thinking, preparing for this interview, a lot of things haven't changed much at all actually. So it's easy to emphasise what was and is now but I guess by the time I got here the really rapid development period during the 1960s had already happened. So I missed that real before and after bit. (Maher, 2013)

These quotes demonstrate Kalamunda's development of infrastructure and buildings through the twentieth century and provide a partial view of the changes which occurred during that time. Addressing the memories through emotional geography provides a better understanding of the past as the spatial nature of memory is bound with the emotional attachments of place and its processes (Jones 2007, 213). As the networks of place and people become compressed through technology and time-space compression, during the twenty-first century, there is a trend towards highlighting the distinctive aspects of place. These distinctive aspects could be part of the current cultural landscape or the memories which occurred in that place. New meanings of place, however, are less spatially defined and are, as Kabachink (2012, 213) and Massey (1994, 121) argue, relational to other places through people's experiences.

In order to retain meaning in places and to prevent placelessness people need to continually make places of meaning in their everyday landscape and tell their stories. Through the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO, 2003), UNESCO has emphasised that if professionals and communities do not record stories about people, place and folklore, it will be lost. Without the continuity of shared history and memory about place, communities may become less able to defend their sense of place. Oral history brings the stories and meaning back to physical places and out of texts which are disconnected to place. Texts that provide an overview of a place's history and significant events and people, do not tend to make particular references to individual sites. Oral history, with its emphasis on recording the everyday and places of meaning, is a methodology which communicates stories of place. As demonstrated by the following quote

But also I remember a fabulous Dutch bakery I suppose you'd call it, a pastry cook, a bit more than a bakery and he used to make the most wonderful peppery, spicy pasties. So we'd sit under the pine trees eating these pasties every time we came up here. So that

would have been about 1973 and that's where the Chinese takeaway shop is now, in Canning Road. (Maher, 2013)

Through the use of social media, the everyday is being recorded and shared more than ever. This trend seems to indicate that members of the community want to highlight what is different about their place, thus working against placelessness, by using the technology that was argued would increase this phenomenon. The use of oral history to record and interpret place ensures that information about the everyday and meaning of place is retained and celebrated.

The everyday occurrences of people's lives are recorded in oral history as they recall place. This information provides a common link with people's experiences in other places but speaks of the particularities of the place where the memory was formed. Collecting, transmitting and preserving intangible cultural heritage is crucial to the retention of sense of place. The recording of the different meanings of place needs to be ongoing as people's connection to place along with the physical landscape changes. Retaining this information through many different forms of media adds to the social history of place and provides a view of place which can be shared through interpretation such as museum exhibitions, signage, trails and books.

## **Chapter 5 – oral history used in interpretation conveys emotion and empowers audiences to form meanings**

The use of memory in interpretation adds multiple perspectives to the historical information about place. It also conveys the significance and meaning of the place to audiences and assists visitors to understand what makes it distinct as discussed in the previous chapters. Using the constructivist approach, as previously discussed, audiences can empathise with the information and relate it to their own experiences or imagine what the place or event would have been like in the past. In doing so audiences have the opportunity to discuss, reflect and form meanings regarding the interpreted information and are empowered to make their own meanings. This chapter will explore how oral history conveys emotion and empowers audiences to make their own meanings using the constructivist approach. Examples from the oral histories I conducted are used to illustrate these points.

### **Interpretation conveys emotion for audiences in the present to connect with the past**

Oral history provides audiences with an affective response (McHugh 2012, 206; Witcomb 2007, 46) as audiences can hear the emotion in the voice of the interviewee as well as the liveliness of their speaking style when listening to an oral history interview (Hoffman 1996, 92). Other interpretation techniques such as storytelling, drama, guides or the use of memory in written form (Hannabuss 2000, 353) also communicate emotion to audiences. The use of first person stories provides an interpersonal connection between the presented information and the audience. Through the presentation of different views audiences can reflect on what is said and compare what is presented to their own lives and experiences, which Tilden (2007, 36) states is necessary to capture an audience's interest.

As discussed in chapter three oral history records information about the places of meaning and significance to a person's life. The interpretation of place highlights the important places and their significance that contribute to sense of place. As mentioned previously, interviewees expressed their emotional connection with Kalamunda. When hearing these stories audiences can then understand the places of meaning and the changes which have occurred over time. These stories contribute to the complexities of place (Affleck and Kvan 2008, 94; Copeland 2006,



87). Paul Lewis (2011) describes his feelings about the Kalamunda of his childhood in the 1960's:

The good thing about Kalamunda in those days is that you knew everybody and everybody knew you, so a few shops, and you'd always be interacting with people 'cos you'd be walking around all the time and you'd buy all your food and all your shoes and clothes, everything there.

Ida Smith's (2011) comments on the feelings she had when first living in Kalamunda in 1949:

for instance, in the street where we lived, like we did at Kalamunda, because we were all there as kind of pioneers, you know.

Agnes Taylor (2011) on the changes in Kalamunda:

A lot of us were upset that Kalamunda was being ruined [when the bush and old buildings were removed for the shopping centre]. They wanted to pull that, dad built the church the Methodist church there in 1918, that was sort of a welcome home or something for all the boys who'd gone from here. But oh there was a great hue and cry, that wasn't to come down at all. Now Stuart Kostera has made it into his private residence.

The three quotes represent different time periods and allow audiences to reflect on what it would be like to be a "pioneer" of a residential street or empathise how a change in the built landscape would affect people. Hein (1998, 157) states that implementing a constructivist view in an interpretive environment the learner needs to associate what is presented with their own knowledge in order to consider the new information. Audiences may reminisce about their own childhoods and the feeling of a tight knit community and how society has changed. For people who have not had similar experiences these emotive quotes can be juxtaposed with other historical information to provide context. This may strengthen the audience's understanding and emotional connection with the interpreted information. Thompson (2000, 6) suggests that this can also lead audiences to form new interpretations. The use of memory and oral history in the interpretation of place highlights the social history of places that were part of the everyday lives of the community (Hayden, 1995, 11). Using the interviewees' memories to interpret Kalamunda, themes emerged such as a strong sense of community, the landscape,

sense of space, family and a sense of Kalamunda being self-contained. Many people commented on the changes which they thought had a negative impact on Kalamunda. These include changes to the built landscape, a larger population and resulting loss of the feeling of a tight knit community, and impacts on the local economy as businesses compete with larger shopping areas out of Kalamunda. Comparing these quotes, the relationship interviewees have with Kalamunda becomes clear and is different for each person depending on what they value.

Interpretation tools such as memoryscapes and heritage trails assist people in the present to engage with the lives of people in the past and their places of meaning in the cultural landscape. For example Graeme Miller's art installation, *Linked*, uses music and oral history recordings of people talking about the area's past to interpret the landscape of a four mile part of freeway in East London (Butler and Miller 2006, 426). The memories provide a different perspective of the area, linking its history with the present to convey the significant sites within a place and the stories associated with them. Using memory and narrative (Stephens 2013, 3) can aid in the understanding of the significance and meaning of places to those who have an attachment to them. When remembering place, it will be described in a narrative form as if a person is walking through the landscape, mentioning what can be seen next to a site and the people associated with it. As interviewees recalled the physical landscape, they referenced the past as they moved through it cognitively. For example, Neil Pember (2011) mentioned

Williams' dairy, now the cows for Williams' dairy, there's a whole bundle of them, they always used to be paddocked at the very end of Heath Road, right down on the escarpment. Each morning and evening, they'd be driven up Temby Avenue, behind the primary school to the corner of Boonooloo Road and Kalamunda Road, there're big double gates there, and they'd be let into the park which was Williams' dairy. They'd be milked and they'd be driven back to the end of Heath Road again; and that was done every morning and every night.

The physical landscape has changed since a herd of cows moved through this part of Kalamunda. The streets named in the memory are built up with houses and traffic and the dairy is now a park. This information changes how the present landscape is viewed and adds a layer of history which may not have been known by many people. The track the cows took can still be walked and evokes the sounds and smells of the animals. Sharing the memories and stories of the past is an important aspect of the use of oral history in interpretation to retain the social and

cultural information about a place. The uses of narrative in interpretation, particularly memoryscape is a powerful interpretative tool to provide an affective response in audiences as they are located physically where the memory was created. Audiences recall the content of interpretation more easily when they use their senses compared to interpretation using a didactic model (Hein 1998, 164).

### **Audiences empowered to form meanings**

Audiences are empowered to form an understanding of the world through the presentation of information that enables discussion and reflection (Copeland, 2006, 84) so that they form a conclusion which makes sense to them (Hein 1998, 34). Champion and Dave (2007, 338) argue that place is an artefact where past events are represented through the cultural landscape that remains and through collected recorded memories. The cultural landscape and memories frame the information and the types of meaning audiences can form. Jill Farrant recalled Kalamunda's built environment:

Most people used to travel to Midland to do their main shopping as there was little choice in Kalamunda then, which I've mentioned before. I remember Stove's the butcher; Hastings the drapery place; Fruit Bowl that I mentioned; the Kookaburra Milk Bar; Hills Estate Agency; the hardware shop and the Kalamunda Hotel. (Farrant, 2011)

Wesley Earp (2011) recalls these businesses, as well as others in more detail.

Fruit Bowl; that was a little shop that was owned by the Rhodes' ...Beside them in Railway Road there was Slatyer's, that was the Hills' Estate Agency, a little white building there. Then opposite on the top there was Thompson's Store and then there was a ladies dress shop next to that and a ladies hairdresser just down a little bit further, at the back of the old railway station where it is now. The other way there was a store on the corner and Bavistock's Butchers were next door to that, then the hotel... And there was Hawley's Shoe Store and a men's hairdressers in the hotel then. Then the Post Office was next to the hotel with a little bit of a gap between then there was a garage on the corner opposite the Methodist Church... Haynes Street there was Kostera's Garage on the south side and then Central Road; and there was a newsagency, Steere's Newsagency... I can't quite remember what was down this side but I think there we just mainly houses until you get to that little street that runs off... There used to be a shop called the Edwardine, Prunster's eventually had that as a greengrocery shop there for a while but there were some Dutch people in it before Prunster's.

Wesley Earp lived in Kalamunda, so these businesses were part of his everyday experiences, however, Jill lived in Gooseberry Hill and her parents only shopped in Kalamunda for certain products. When comparing the quotes audiences can see how people only recalled the places that were part of their experience. It is also interesting to note that Jill mentioned the lack of choice of shops in Kalamunda. Comparing her response with other interviewees of a similar age, she is the only person who mentioned this. Other interviewees seemed to view the range of shops as capable of servicing their needs. Audiences could view the two quotes as examples of ties to the community through established relationships, differences in taste and expectations of the types and variety of products available.

Interviewees mentioned that Kalamunda changed from a place with a small community which had not changed greatly in the first part of the twentieth century, to the introduction in the 1960s and 1970s of large chain stores and growth in the local area. Different perspectives on place can be understood and reflected on through the following quotes:

I don't think Kalamunda changed until I, I was trying to think, I remember I came back once and said, 'wow this has all changed'. I think it might've been when I went overseas when I was about, well, my second time overseas when I was in my late twenties (20s) so that would've been probably in the 70s, late 70s, went overseas for about a year and a half and came back and Kalamunda had just changed. Coles had been built and the Commonwealth Bank had been built and a few other banks were there. Some of the old shops had gone and places like The Last Drop pub had come in. (Lewis, 2011)

In a lot of ways it's changed greatly but I was thinking, preparing for this interview, a lot of things haven't changed much at all actually. So it's easy to emphasise what was and is now but I guess by the time I got here the really rapid development period during the 1960s had already happened. So I missed that real before and after bit. (Maher, 2013)

While these quotes do not provide the interviewee's opinion on the change they do provide audiences with the ability to compare the development of Kalamunda with the wider suburban development at the time. It is my position that both interviewees viewed the changes as positives, however, they note that they were not present during the changes. Their memories are in contrast to Agnes Taylor's memory as noted in the previous section. Both interviewees were aged in their 20s at the time

of the memory so represent a young person's view of change which is generally positive.

The use of "memory talk" (Hawke 2010, 1335) in interpretation connects people and place through historical documents, photographs and the current cultural landscape. Through the constructivist approach visitors are encouraged to develop their own meanings from the interpreted information (Hein 2006, 5) and through their knowledge and experiences (Hooper-Greenhill 2006, 237). As audiences view and interact with the presented information, they may recall their own memories based around the themes or events. Many interviewees mentioned the Kalamunda Show which has been an important yearly event for over 100 years.

Oh yeah that was great. The Kalamunda Show was always good fun, like even when I went to primary school, you used to have the pipers running around and we'd follow them around as kids. They used to have the log chops and they used to have those little cars, you used to whip around the outside of the oval, it was all dirt, they were little racing cars. They used to pump the petrol in with their hands, you know pump away and go around all the corners sideways, that was always good fun. Back then they didn't have fireworks because every 5<sup>th</sup> November we had our fireworks night and that was always a big night, you know you would spend ages making up your bonfire; great big Guy Fawkes on the top of it...The Kalamunda Show was always good fun and everyone used to get involved, there was cake making and flowers and fruit and there was always a dance that night. Everyone sort of, even the kids used to go up there and hang around and wander around outside, you never went in because that was all a bit formal. You'd roam around, play over at the War Memorial, down on the oval. It was a good life, yeah the Show was good. (Earp, 2011)

The Kalamunda Show gosh yes that was a dress up, gloves and hat, oh golly yes you'd have on your best for that. I won at about the age of ten (10) I won the best dressed doll and at an older date I got second for my bread, I forget what else. Oh the Show was a lovely thing in those days, people used to preserve their fruit and all sorts of things, lovely clothes and cooking; oh the cooking was beautiful...The Show itself would finish at six (6pm) and people would take their exhibits and the whole lot and then there'd be someone there, a gang, to get the room ready for dancing, and get it all fixed up. Boys used to love getting round on bags to make the floor all shiny and slippery and so on but I was too shy, I was a terribly shy kid and I didn't dance. I didn't dance until my husband taught me to dance on the ship coming home (laughs) and then I loved it, he was an excellent dancer. He was very overweight but he was as light as a feather on his feet, wonderful dancer. (Taylor, 2011)

Pauline Young (2011) mentioned she always went to the Show. Elaine Sargent (2012) recalled

My friend [Pat O'Brien] used to like the exhibits, and I'd think, what do you want to look at them for? [We girls learnt to do sewing which was put on display at] the Kalamunda Show [every year] and the boys did manual [and fretwork]... we learned how to make things and it was always displayed at the Kalamunda Show every year, all our things.

These memories, particularly when used to interpret the specific landscape they occurred in, enliven the space which is a sports oval for the rest of the year. Comparing the memories, the different meanings the Kalamunda Show had for interviewees can be understood such as the social aspect, competition, excitement and community. Audiences can relate to these memories through their attendance of events like this, the social aspect of the memories and understand their meaning and significance to the interviewees. The memories may also evoke memories of unrelated events in the lives of the audience. For example childhood memories and school memories through the keywords fireworks, Guy Fawkes, dances, learning sewing or manual at school found in the quotes.

The use of oral history in an interpreted environment, such as a museum, can portray multiple meanings about place that encourages audiences to consider different perspectives. The National Museum of Singapore effectively demonstrates this, in my opinion. When I visited I noticed that many exhibitions use oral history to provide multiple perspectives on the country's history through first person accounts. The quotes showed a glimpse into the experiences of the people of Singapore. These meanings are shared through interpretation and can reinforce identity and values within a group, whether this is a family group or a larger cohesive social group (Paris 2006, 263). Through interpretation, layers of the past can be highlighted, particularly if its significance is overlooked in the everyday environment (Hems and Blockley 2006, 4). It is important that the sense of place that is presented and experienced by audiences is authentic (Harvey 2012, 11) as audiences will be critical of interpretation which does not convey a sense of its history and aspects of place that they can relate to. Memories which recall different information are also important in forming a clear image of the past as it may lead to the re-emergence of information absent from other historical texts or widely known information.

Using memories in interpretation provides an avenue for the significance of place to be known by audiences as it is told by the people who have a connection to it. It allows the past and the present to be linked via memories that enable some understanding of what a place was like. Oral history provides a view to the past through memories that enable audiences to engage emotionally with the information presented. Audiences can relate the memory used in the interpreted information to their own experiences which empowers the audience to form their own meanings. Applying the constructivist approach to interpretation suits the use of oral history as audiences can use their own understanding to reflect on what is presented.

## **Conclusion**

This research demonstrates how oral history is used to interconnect memory, place and interpretation. As a cultural record oral history records factual information about place, as well as its social history and the sense of place felt by people who have a connection to it. This exegesis has explored oral history's role in recording and interpreting place and its role in building a layered and complex history of place. In order to understand place and retain information on sites of meaning, oral history interviews continually need to be conducted so the changes in place can be documented. This results in a community which understands and can communicate its particularities and what makes it special.

Using the interviews I conducted this exegesis has explored what people recall about Kalamunda and changes which have occurred, what they value about it and the physical landscape. Analysing the interviews in relation to each chapter topic, it was interesting to see a pattern in the responses, particularly when interviewees were asked about their feelings towards Kalamunda. The interviews also documented the changes which occurred in Kalamunda from a self-contained town to a place which is part of the outer metropolitan suburbs but still has remnants of its past located in the physical landscape. The memories provided a lot of information about this earlier time which can be used to interpret the current and future cultural landscape. The information also increased the knowledge available of people and places no longer present in landscape.

Chapter three explored how oral history as a methodology communicates aspects of the past and connections to place. This exegesis explored the interviewee's feelings of attachment to Kalamunda and their connection to place. The interviewees expressed memories which evoked Kalamunda from the past and their sense of place. The memories of Kalamunda have revealed layers of meaning of place which are important to the landscapes of people's lives. It is important to record information through oral history about the changes to place, as well as the stories about the people of that place in order to add new layers of history and express the identity of place.

Chapter four addressed the idea that oral history records the everyday and particularities of place which retains meaning. Information on the everyday is important to oral history as these details are part of the recalled memory. As



examined in chapter three, memories are place specific and it is the particularities of place which make it distinctive. The practice of oral history ensures that anyone who wishes to may tell his or her story and memories of place. This allows multiple views to be retained which add layers of meaning to place. Through multiple layers and viewpoints, connections between people and particular times of a place can be made. Sharing this information enriches the social history of place and builds on one person's own experiences. As places are connected through technology, this information is being used to promote the history and sites of meaning of places.

The exegesis examined the use of oral history in interpretation to convey emotion and to empower audiences to form meanings in chapter five. The use of oral history as a first person account allows audiences to make an emotional connection with the presented memory. The constructivist approach advocates the use of multiple viewpoints to depict many different memories about place and its complexity. Audiences can reflect on the presented information using their own knowledge to make their own meanings. Comparing interviewees' responses on common topics demonstrated that people remember what was meaningful to them. Connections between people and place, in the present and the past, can be highlighted through memories which can add layers of history while enriching the history provided in other sources.

To answer the research question of what is the role of oral history in interpreting a place my research indicates that oral history provides a method of recording memory which is important to understanding the social and cultural history of place. Its use in interpretation to depict social history and tell stories of the past is an effective method to engage audiences. Oral history presents visitors with the ability to understand the meanings and significance of place, through the stories of people who have a connection and understand its history. Oral history has an important role in enabling many people to speak about their experiences which add layers of meaning to place, particularly if the sites are not visible in the cultural landscape. It is important to record information about the changes to place, as well as the stories about the people of that place in order to add new layers of history and express its identity. Oral history is a methodology which can be used to record people's social and emotional connection to place and preserve the information for the future.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 – Newspaper articles**

### **Appendix 2 – Oral history interview transcripts**

### **Appendix 3 – Interviewee consent forms**

# Looking for long-time Kalamunda residents

A CURTIN University researcher is on the lookout for long-time residents who can add to the recorded history of Kalamunda.

Alethea du Boulay is studying a master of philosophy in cultural heritage and looking for people to be interviewed for her research project.

The project will look at how oral history can lead to a deeper understanding of a community.

"The oral histories

will record people's memories of changes that have occurred in Kalamunda, such as changes to the town centre or the development of the local community," Ms du Boulay said.

"Oral history has been used since the 1960s and 1970s to record individual and community memories in a way that isn't captured by written histories on a specific area or topic.

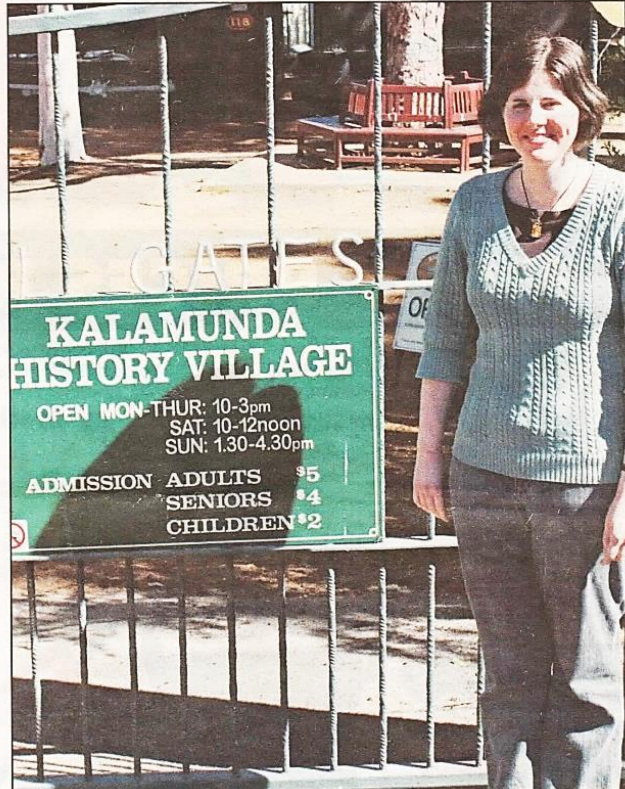
"Recording oral histories has become increasingly popular to make a record of the stories in communities and workplaces."

Ms du Boulay said oral histories were a successful way to capture everyday life from times gone by.

"The depth of knowledge and information contained in oral history interviews create a picture about the community and place the person is talking about," she said.

"People talk about their daily lives – places they played as children, stories about growing up, local shops and shopkeepers, school and special events.

"The stories bring the past to life and resonate with listeners who can



Alethea du Boulay, a Curtin University researcher, is looking for people to interview about the history of Kalamunda. Picture: CHRIS THOMAS

also relate to the situations.

"The interviews are a snapshot of daily life."

Ms du Boulay chose Kalamunda for her research because it has a long and interesting, developing from a resort town to an outer suburb of Perth.

## Own identity

"Kalamunda still maintains its own identity, which I think is important to record for

the future," she said.

"There has been a lot of information previously collected by members of the Kalamunda and Districts Historical Society and the Shire of Kalamunda but there will always be gaps in any local history collection.

"It's important to keep collecting information as the community changes."

Ms du Boulay is look-

ing for 20 people of various ages, backgrounds, and historical connections to Kalamunda.

Each interview will take about one hour.

A copy of the interviews will be added to the Kalamunda and Districts Historical Society collection, with the consent of those interviewed, available to the public.

For more details, call 9293 4736.

# Search for old connections

A CURTIN University researcher is looking for long-time Kalamunda residents who can add to a recorded history of the Hills town.

Alethea du Boulay is studying a Master of Philosophy in Cultural Heritage and is looking for people to interview for her research project which will examine how oral history can lead to a deeper understanding of a community.

She is looking for 20 people of various ages, backgrounds, and historical connections to Kalamunda.

Each interview will take about an hour. "The oral histories will record people's memories of changes which have occurred in Kalamunda, such as changes to the town centre or the development of the local community," Ms du Boulay said.

"Oral history has been used since the 1960/70s to record individual's and community's memories in a way which aren't captured by written histories on a specific area or topic," she said.

Ms du Boulay said the depth of

knowledge and information contained in oral history interviews created a picture about the community and place the person was talking about.

"People talk about their daily lives, places they played as children, stories about growing up, local shops and shopkeepers, school and special events," she said.

Ms du Boulay chose Kalamunda because she said it had a long and interesting history.

"Kalamunda still maintains its

own identity, which I think is important to record for the future," she said.

"There has been a lot of information previously collected by members of the Kalamunda and Districts Historical Society and the Shire of Kalamunda, but there will always be gaps in a local history collection.

"It's important to keep collecting information as the community changes."

For more information, contact Alethea du Boulay on 9293 4736.

## **Appendix 2 – Oral history interview transcripts**



## **Oral History interview**

**Laurie Bechelli**

**Interview date: 22 December 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2011, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Laurie Bechelli for my Curtin University thesis project, the role of oral history to interpret a place. Can I just start with your name and your birth date please Laurie?**

Okay. Laurie Bechelli and I was born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 1967 which sadly makes me forty four (44) (laughs).

**Can you tell me a little bit about your family please?**

Okay. My own family?

**Just your parents and siblings.**

My parents? Okay. I have a mum and dad, both live in Kalamunda. I have two (2) sisters. We all grew up in Pickering Brook but now my sisters live in Ballajura, which I can't understand why (laughs), and I live here with my wife, Chania and two (2) daughters, Josephine and Brianna.

**And what were your parents' names?**

Ernie and Julie; and when dad grew up in Pickering Brook his next door neighbour was called Bert; so Ernie and Bert (laughs). It's true! Ernie and Bert lived next door to each other. It was quite funny.

**Were you born locally?**

Yes; Swan Districts Hospital.

**What can you tell me about your earliest memories of Pickering Brook and Kalamunda?**

Wow, okay. I went to Pickering Brook Primary School and we grew up on an orchard, so I remember the space, the open space, and just doing things; like it was semi-rural and everyone always used to call it 'the District', which is a word you don't hear much anymore. I remember our phone numbers that we only ever used the last three (3) digits, so ours was in those days, the last three digits were 245 whereas you know now its 9293 8245. You just rang the last three (3) numbers and it would put you to anyone in Pickering Brook.

**Okay. That's pretty cool.**

Yeah; so my grandparents lived next door so we'd just go 225 whereas now you've got to use eight (8) digits; so I remember that. I remember the school being really, really small. I remember everyone in Pickering Brook being on the orchards so the whole thing was about fruit and orchards and growing and pruning and thinning (laughs). I also remember just, yeah, very friendly. I remember Kalamunda being, like for me it felt like a long way away. It was only about a fifteen (15) minute drive but in those days it was a long way (laughs), and it was a bit of a big deal, like to go to Kalamunda was for a special occasion and to go to Perth was like a really, really big deal. And when Carousel Shopping Centre was smaller, to go shopping in Carousel was like once a year thing, so yeah a bit different to now.

**In terms of the shops and things in Pickering Brook, the shops could cater for everyone within Pickering or did you have to go to Kalamunda?**

Yeah, Kalamunda. There was one little one that was called 'the Shop' and it was just a general store and it's still out there now. It had a little petrol station to the side which is no longer there; but everyone knew everyone. So you'd go to the shop and you'd just book it up; you'd never have to pay like you do now. Even with your petrol you'd just say to Barry Spriggs, "just book it up," and at the end of the month you'd get a bill. But, yeah, everyone knew everybody but apart from that Pickering Brook had a little golf course, had a sporting club which that's where I played footy a lot; bit of a tennis club and later on a swimming pool which has since been closed down. But other than that, no, nothing!

**The school you said was quite small.**

Yes.

**Anything else about school?**

Just, I don't know, just there was like about sixty (60) or seventy (70) kids so it had split classes, so you like had a KP/1, 2,3,4 and a 5,6,7; or something like that. I remember the little church across the road 'cos we used to go to the Catholic Church. I remember there being a really grumpy old priest (laughs). What else? So between the school and the church there was a little convent where, there used to be a little Catholic school over in Pickering Brook and Pickering Brook used to actually to be called Carilla in those days and there was a little Catholic school. That closed down and the church stayed and there was just one room off to the side and that's just, I don't know what that became, just a spare room. And the nuns moved out and our friends the Holland's lived in the little convent, yeah.

**I didn't know that about Pickering Brook.**

Yeah. There are books around on the history of Pickering Brook. I think my parents have got one and it shows all the migrant families, how they came in and they settled here and they grew orchards. But eventually you found that most of kids like myself moved on. There's only some of the boys that stayed and ran the orchards.

**So the migrant families were there. Did you notice the differences a lot or did all the kids play together and that sort of thing?**

No. Because I've got an Italian surname, but I don't look Italian, I got teased; so they'd call me a Pommie (laughs).

(5:07)

It was funny because when you look at the school roll everyone had an Italian surname and some of the little boys that were my age couldn't speak English when they first got there so English was their second language. And their whole mind set was about work ethic and how hard it was so they would go, before school all the boys would go and work on the orchard then they'd come to school and their parents would pick 'em up and they'd go back and work. And because my parents didn't make me do it I was always a bit different so I didn't perhaps fit in as well; and I also had no aspirations to become an orchardist. I couldn't think of anything worse. So for them, yeah, and just growing up all they wanted to do was drive tractors, drive cars, pick fruit, work on the orchard so I didn't really fit in because my aspirations were completely different. Interesting.

**So you went to Kalamunda High School?**



Yes (laughs).

**Was that a bit different?**

Oh, yeah; major, major, just blew me away because I was so used to being in a little tiny school where everyone knew everyone, to go into this huge school. I think in those days there were about twelve hundred (1200) kids in 1980. Yeah, I remember being terrified seeing Year 12 boys like six (6) foot tall and beards (laughs). And so overwhelmed by it all. But, you know, it was mostly a positive experience as well. You know Kalamunda High had its elements. There was the rough crowd, a lot of fights in those days down the back of the oval. But you knew who the rough crowd were and I just chose to keep away.

**Did lots of the kids from Pickering Brook go to Kalamunda High?**

Mostly. Some of the boys went to Mazenod and some of the girls went to St Brigid's but most went to Kalamunda High and I think most of them did, like, their three (3) to five (5) years and went back to the orchards. Some didn't, but I was pretty well the only did TAE [Tertiary Admission Exam] as it was back then. Yeah, I think I was the only one, or maybe one or two (2) others, but they all pretty much went back to the orchards or trades.

**Any memorable experiences or teachers at high school?**

I should say your dad (laughs). I don't know, it's like most things, probably your friendships are the most memorable things and like all those guys now are pretty much my friends still today. And pretty quickly I moved on from the Pickering Brook guys, 'cos I never really fitted in, so come Year 8 I could see that I just didn't belong with these guys so I made a whole group of friends; the Kalamunda and Lesmurdie guys and, yeah, we're still in touch today which is, what's that? Thirty (30) years later. Yeah; and that's been really good. They were also, all of them went on to uni like I did so we all thought along the same lines. I was lucky because they were all really smart so when you're in with that sort of crowd it drags you up. But other than that, I don't really remember much about high school. Yeah; it wasn't unpleasant. I look at what my kids get now at high schools and, you know like, my eldest daughter just went to Europe with school; and I think back then I went to maybe Coolgardie (laughs). But that's just a sign of the times; it's just the way things are. Probably feel a bit sad when you drive past Kalamunda High to have realised not much has changed; it's pretty much the same. Whereas you drive past St Brigid's and Mazenod and they've been completely reinvented. In fact, you can say that for all the government schools. I'm a principal of a Catholic primary school and all Catholic schools have really reinvented themselves, whereas the poor old government schools just haven't had the same injection of funds; and a lot of them look very tired. They look how they looked thirty (30) years ago which is a bit sad; and they've had that recent economic stimulus money but, again, every government school got the exact same building; which I don't think was very well done. Whereas in the Catholic system we at least employed our own architects and we designed and got pretty much what we wanted. So, that always makes you feel a bit sad and the other thing I feel sad about is when you drive past Kalamunda High there is this huge big security fence around it now. I don't know how true it is but I was told that it was to keep the drug dealers out; but I don't know if that's true or not. Yeah; probably not true. I've got friends who have a daughter there and apparently she's very happy, they like it; but pretty much, like my daughters go to St Brigid's, and all our friends' kids go to St Brigid's and Mazenod so we tend to know more about those schools than Kalamunda High.

**I went to Kalamunda, so a little bit different.**

Yeah; but it was fine, nothing wrong.

**I was going to ask you did you get involved with sport at high school.**

At school a bit, yes, just footy and athletics, but out of school I played footy for Pickering Brook (laughs). And that was good cos all the Kalamunda guys came out and so we had a really awesome time. It was really, really good for about two (2) or three (3) years after high school and then sadly the club folded and, you know, by that stage we were well and truly at uni and doing our own things.

(10:26)

**Okay then. So other than sport and I guess working on your family's orchard, a little bit, what did you do in your spare time growing up, your family as well?**

My dad worked a lot 'cos he was an orchardist and he left and became a timber worker, so he was working like six (6) or seven (7) days a week and mum was a teacher, so she was working. Probably because we had the space in Pickering Brook we used to have motorbikes and dad's car, so we'd go hooning through the bush tracks and all that sort of stuff which is really good. So we most probably spent most of our time just driving and riding motorbikes, playing sport on the weekends, studying, watching too much TV. Yeah; I think that was pretty much it. I can't think what else, just socialising with family and friends.

**And it was obviously pretty tight knit in Pickering Brook so you would've done a lot?**

Yeah, Pickering Brook's interesting because you had so many Italians there and they sort of brought a lot of the Italy thing with them, so it was a bit of a divided town. So you had the northern Italians who didn't really talk to the southern Italians (laughs) and that divide is still there. Actually there's a bit of conflict in the town as well and it's pretty much along those lines, as there's a bit of a time warp I found. What happened was a lot of these people came out in the 1920s and 30s with these really old fashioned morals and ethics which were wonderful and they kept them, and they couldn't understand why modern Australia didn't share the same morals and ethics. Then like, in the 1970s or 80s they'd go back to Italy expecting it to be how it was when they left and they had the shock of their lives when they found that Italy was also modern and quite liberated; and they found that really hard. So in a little way it's a bit like how Italy was a long time ago, especially with the older people, and they've held on really tightly to that sort of stuff. That's probably why a lot of the younger guys have left, because they want to live in the modern society.

**That's interesting.**

Yeah. It's an interesting little town Pickering. There's a lot of new people coming in, new families, which is always really good but you've still got that old; and you've still got the families that have been there three (3) or four (4) generations. And they've got all the orchards and they now own most of the orchards in town or have the big businesses that support it all. It's a pretty place.

**And pretty self-contained in terms of the community.**

Yeah. It's funny because it's a metropolitan area but it was very rural. I did a teaching stint in Northampton a couple of years ago and I found the parallels quite amazing. And even though Northampton's five (5) hours away, same size school, same size town, same mentality. It was quite weird going back but this time instead of being a student at a little school, you're the principal of a little school and, yeah, a lot of the values that they held were quite similar to what Pickering Brook held.

**I think even now I guess thinking about Pickering Brook myself, I do think about it as apart from other places up in the hills.**

Yeah.

**It's interesting I still think like that.**

Yeah; that's right. I think the sad thing now is because all the orchardists have just sprayed and sprayed and sprayed, you find a lot of the old guys dying. Just about all of them are dying of cancers.

**Oh no.**

Yeah. Or if they're not dying of cancer they've got a cancer of some sort, so that always worries me. A lot of things like, my mum grew up in Bassendean and as soon as she hit Pickering Brook she had really, really bad hay fever for the twenty (20) or so years she lived there. And you hear a lot of people have really bad allergies and the minute they leave town the allergies just go. There's an orchardist out there, and he's got some little cider, making cider, brewery or whatever, and he claims to be organic and I just don't buy it. You cannot be organic out there because his orchard is surrounded by everyone else that sprays, so it just can't be. And that's a bit of a cultural thing too whereas this generation of people want to eat more naturally and organic whereas that generation, even my dad, he just wants to nuke it all with sprays (laughs) and chemicals.

(15:12)

**Get it the best it can be I guess.**

Yeah, no, it's funny; probably a generational thing.

**Okay. So you've said you went to uni?**

Yes.

**So you did teaching at uni?**

Yes, at Mt Lawley. It used to be called WA College of Advanced Education in those days and then I did a Diploma of Teaching because you could only do your three (3) year course and then we had to go and teach for a couple of years; and then we were allowed to come back in and do our Bachelor of Education. But that's all changed now, so it's now called Edith Cowan University. When I did it, it was a thirty (30) unit, three (3) year course and they changed it to a twenty four (24) unit, three (3) year degree, the year after I left.

**Oh, no.**

Yeah; so that was a bit rude, but that's alright. Yes, I did that and then I did my Bachelor of Education after a couple of years and then I just kept going and did my

Master of Education as well. But I'm not going to study anymore (laughs). I've done my bit, I'm over it.

**Have you been teaching or being a Principal at many schools?**

Yeah; sadly I've been teaching my whole life which in a way, I say sadly because a lot of people go and do other stuff but I don't know what else I want to do. I just love teaching. So I went straight from high school to uni and straight from uni into teaching, and I taught for nineteen (19) years, straight, and then I became a principal in my twentieth (20<sup>th</sup>) year and I've been a principal for five (5) years now. Yes, I still like it. It's changing, education's changing really rapidly the whole time. Yeah, I just love the interaction with people and just the ability to make a difference to people's lives; so, yeah, it's good.

**Okay; I'll ask a bit about your own family and you've mentioned your wife and two (2) daughters. So when did you meet your wife?**

(laughs) At Kalamunda High School but we didn't go out at high school, we sort of met up, I don't know, five (5) years after high school. Yeah, so she's a Kalamunda girl as well. Her parents are from Africa so they migrated out in 1968 because I think they had the Mau Mau uprising and to be a white person in Africa in those days was not very good. So they migrated out to here and settled in Australia, and yeah; a bit like the Pickering Brook story. They spent many years saying, oh, no, the old country's better. They went back in the late 80s and got the shock of their lives and realised really that Australia's a much safer and better place and really, since then, they haven't wanted to go back to Africa. She works as a nurse at Kalamunda Hospital (laughs), so we don't go very far. We sort of got to know each other because we share the same birthday; so we are identical in age to the day. We've got two (2) daughters, Josephine's Year 12 next year at St Brigid's and Brianna's Year 11 at St Brigid's next year. They went to St Brigid's all their life apart from out three (3) years in Northampton. They went to St Mary's with me and Nagal Catholic College in Geraldton for a year.

**So that's all your personal stuff.**

Yeah.

**So we'll talk a little bit about Kalamunda now.**

Yeah.

**Since your first memories about travelling in from Pickering Brook, how has Kalamunda developed over the time that you've known it.**

Not a huge amount (laughs), which I think in many ways is nice 'cos you've still got that village feel to Kalamunda. I'm just trying to think. Up where Coles is now there used to be a, I think a Toyota Service Centre on that top corner by the roundabout is now. I think Coles itself before it got redeveloped, I think it may have faced the other way. I think where Bunnings is it was a Woolies or a Big W or something. Where Thai on the Hill is was Walker's Hardware. What else was there? Other than that, I mean the hotel got refurbished in the 80s I think. Other than that I don't think a huge amount's happened to Kalamunda, and Barberry Square's always been there. Crabb's, that got refurbished a little while ago. There used to be a Toyota car yard between Stirk Medical and Crabb's and that's since gone, and where Kalamunda Toyota is now there used to be a BP Service Station there. Where Barberry Square

is there used to be a Shell Service Station; so probably that's the big thing, is the loss of all the service stations.

(20:00)

Where the Gull is on the top of the hill, that's been upgraded as well; that used to be a little tiny cute little service station. Stirk Park's the same. Probably the big thing lately is also the loss of restaurants. We used to have, like, the Copperwood which was really nice; you had the Don's and it used to be called Leonardo da Vinci's before that. You've got Thai on the Hill now but, yeah, all the restaurants seem to have gone; and in their place I guess you've got more wood fired pizza; like, you've got three (3) of those now. You've got Embers in Gooseberry Hill, you've got, what's that one called near Chicken Treat? Villagio or something, and there's one in Lesmurdie. So I suppose there's been less restaurants and more fast food. Other than that, it's not much different; and the banks are still there, the real estate agents are still there. The markets: they have the markets once a month which has started up, and that's a good thing. I suppose out of Kalamunda you've got a little wine region developing, the Perth hills, which we frequent them a fair bit, and they're good. In some ways it's good that it's kept itself small and not too big but in another way it'd be nice if it probably had a little bit more to offer. Because I'd say most of the young kids now would get on the bus and go down to Perth or to Midland for the cinemas or Carousel or Belmont. So, yeah, all the entertainment seems to be out of Kalamunda. And I think when we were young we used to go The Last Drop which is now called The Best Drop. And the Kalamunda Hotel; and really that's it.

### **Did you go to the Kalamunda pools during summer?**

A little bit, yeah, on the slides which have just been upgraded which is good. You have the squash courts which is now Gym Tonic, but I've never been since it's become Gym Tonic. And you had Charlie Carters which was Rules, which became Action and is now Woolworth's. But that doesn't seem to get used as much as Coles in Kalamunda Central. I suppose the thing my wife complains about the most is the lack of loyalty of the Kalamunda people. So instead of supporting the shops in Kalamunda they'll tend to go to Carousel or Midland. She also runs a small business from home and she finds it frustrating that Kalamunda people don't support Kalamunda business; they tend to go elsewhere.

### **I guess if the people supported the shops then maybe more shops would come in.**

Yeah, that's right. Friends of ours had the ABC Bookshop which has since closed up and, again, you know, people are either buying online or you go down to K Mart in Midland and you can buy the same book for a lot less. So, I'd say they're the biggest changes I've seen.

**Ok.**

Hopefully, I can't think of anymore.

### **That's great. Who were some of the local identities of the area? Can you think of any?**

(laughs) Not really. Pickering Brook we had George Spriggs who was our local parliamentarian and that was about it. Other than that I can't really, I can't think of anyone. I mean I know you've got your Shire President and that here but they're pretty low profile. No; I'm sorry, there's no-one famous.

**Ok. Any community groups or organisations you are involved or have been involved in, or your family?**

My mother-in-law does Meals on Wheels. We belong to the local Catholic Church so we have our own involvement through that; and of course the schools where I taught. I taught at Mary's Mount and I've also taught at St Brigid's so I've had my own involvement there. And now I'm at St Michael's, Bassendean which is not far away, but no; no a huge involvement with community groups unfortunately.

**What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

Ok. When we lived in Northampton it's funny what you miss. I missed the trees! It's really weird, 'cos in Northampton it's just dry and flat and wheat farms and it's just incredible how you miss trees, like when you come back it's like, "oh my God, there's trees and it's green." Also the other thing we do like, it's not Kalamunda, but we really like in summer going up to Mundaring Weir Hotel and often they'll have bands playing. Behind it they've got the Kookaburra Cinema so we actually really missed that. Every time we'd come home from Northampton it always felt like home when you went down to Embers and bought an Embers' pizza and then you went up to the Kookaburra and watched an outdoor movie, or to the Mundaring Weir Hotel and saw a band. Then it felt like you were home.

(25:16)

And of course both lots of our parents live in Kalamunda so that always felt good. What we really love is where we live here in Gooseberry Hill, at the end of our road we've got national park and we do lots of bush walking; so, yeah, love the bush especially in winter. We go bush walking all the time. My youngest daughter made a book. She took all these photographs of the local wild flowers and, yeah, it's really good and in my office at work I've got them blown up and stuck on the walls. So we really get into the local environment; the birds and the flowers and just all that sort of stuff.

**I can see why you would've missed it.**

Yeah, it's weird. But trees!

**Yeah, makes a big difference.**

Yeah. I'll show you very quickly a photo of Northampton.

**Oh, yeah.**

You can see, no trees!

**A few trees.**

Yeah, a couple but that's about it. Yeah, just the shade and just, now you look out it's just a wall of greenery where there it was a wall of dust.

**Do you have any other memories or anything about Kalamunda that you can think of?**

No. What I like is when you do go shopping, you quite often bump into people and stop and have a chat. So I like its friendliness. I like how it's not quite so fast paced as inner suburbs. I like how it's a little bit of both, it's a little bit of country and a little bit of city and if you need the city it's only really half an hour away. It always

surprises me people want to live on the beach and then you have to deal with the freeways and you have to go like twenty (20), thirty (30), forty (40) kilometres north or south whereas here we're just east, and we really are. You don't have the traffic hassles getting into the city that the freeways have. I always wonder when people say, "oh, you guys in the hills are so far away," but we're not. The only thing that worries me about the hills are bush fires, obviously, but I think the lifestyle; and it is, it's very much lifestyle and you've got room to move, like, our block's twelve hundred (1200) square metres and in the city you'd have three houses on this. I like the freedom, the openness, the nature, the environment. You don't feel crowded in here, you don't feel claustrophobic.

**That's really important.**

Yeah; and I think it's just a really great place to bring up the family; got good friends and good life.

**Excellent. Well that's it for my questions.**

Beautiful.

**Thank you very much for your time.**

Pleasure, very happy to help you out.

Interview ends 28 minutes

**Oral History interview**

**Wesley Earp**

**Interview date: 30 September 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**





**It's the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2011, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Wesley Earp for my Curtin Uni thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place. I'll just start with your name and your birth date please, Wesley?**

Okay. Wesley Earp, 3rd of November 1943.

**Can you tell me a little bit about your family please – your parents and siblings?**

Well, my father came to Kalamunda because [he was] appointed here as the school teacher at the primary school. My mother Grace, my father's name was Neil Foxe Earp. My mother's name was Grace Frances Earp and she was a Wallis from Walliston. So she was virtually coming back home after she'd been in lots of country towns. I've got a brother Lionel who is seven (7) years older and a sister, Valerie, who is two (2) years older. None of them were born in Kalamunda. Lionel was born in Perth, Valerie was born in Margaret River and I was born in Margaret River. That's when dad was a teacher at Rosa Brook.

**And how old were you when you moved to Kalamunda – when your family moved?**

I was seven (7) and I went straight to the Kalamunda Primary School. We looked at a number of houses and we selected 85 Railway Road as [that was] where dad decided we'd go. That was an old house with no [scheme] water [only a well and rain water tanks], it did have electricity. It was a wooden, weatherboard house. I know there were a fair few white ants in the stumps underneath because I had to go and put creosote on them [as] I was the smallest to get [under] there.

**So it was a good move? Did you mind moving?**

Oh, yes; it was a good move. We were in Muchea before that. Muchea was a mill town and [when] the mill closed down then so did just about everything in town. Not that it was much of a town, just one shop. But, no, we had good friends up there but when you're seven (7), sort of it doesn't much matter and we arrived in Kalamunda and settled.

**So just talking a bit about the primary school; was it a big school when you came?**

No, it wasn't. It was just one, two (2), three (3), four (4), about four (4); maybe five (5) rooms. Whilst we were there they put up what they called the prefabricated classrooms; that was, I think, four (4) they put on, so that was a big change. But during that time when I was seven (7) or eight (8) the Dutch, a lot of Dutch kids arrived from Indonesia when Indonesia became independent. We used to tease them a fair bit but they were capable of retaliating pretty well. I remember that much about it (laughs) because they used to wear leather pants and stuff like that, what was a bit odd. When I was going to primary school we never wore shoes, you know; it was always barefooted at school. Kalamunda Primary School was very good, I mean I enjoyed my time there very much there.

**And was it located in the same place as it now?**

Exactly the same place; yeah. Some of the teachers, I'm just trying to think of some of the teachers there. There was Mrs Olive Eaton, she was there. She was fairly

strict, but I was lucky because we both shared the same birth date being the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November, so she sort of treated me just a little bit better than she treated some of the other kids; but she was a good teacher. And there was Mrs, oh, look, I can't remember too many. Ben Rees was the headmaster. He had a daughter there who went on to become a head girl at Methodist Ladies College, I know that much. And another daughter by the name of Toni Rees. Oh, there were lots of other kids there that I got to know. You don't want to know the name of the kids I went to school with do you?

**No, that's okay; just a few stand out ones if there was any. So was there any stories you can remember about school? You said about teasing the Dutch kids.**

Well, it was funny because before the prefabs went up the school was split, they had classrooms in the old Scout hall, my dad taught in the Scout hall, and they had classrooms in the Church of England hall which was in the centre of town.

(5:12)

They were two (2) [off site classrooms], because the school really did grow very quickly. You know we used to enjoy our sports. We used to play sports against all the schools around the area, Kalamunda being the biggest we were always given a handicap, but you know schools like Carinya and Canning Mills, places that don't exist anymore, were all part of the schooling then. Have you heard this from others?

**No; no. So they used to come into Kalamunda or you all went to different schools each year?**

Well, mostly it was Kalamunda because [we] had a decent oval. I do remember we went to, the school sports in Barton's Mill Prison which was still active at the time. We had the running races and jumps and [relays and other sorts of things] (dog barking). That will go on the tape (laughs). I suppose in [about] Year 5, we started a football team in Kalamunda, I think there was a football team before that but this was an underage football competition. It was run by Swan Districts Football Club and we had a coach called Ernie Reilly and he was an electrician or some tradesman in Kalamunda. He'd come along every Tuesday and Thursday night and we'd do training. So that's when Kalamunda Oval was just totally gravel, there was no grass on it at all so if you fell over you got pretty well scraped up. I can remember that when they decided to grass it they had, during its early development, put subsoil drainage in it and they were all full of cinders from the Midland workshops or somewhere where you could get cinders from, to take the water away; but we dug up all those drains. As kids just you know young kids, all the footballers went along and helped dig up all the drains, made them flow better, and then we planted just runners of grass on the oval. That was quite a big deal. It's a pretty well grassed oval now. So I went on to play quite a bit of football with [Kalamunda]. I played a couple of seasons with Swan Districts after we finished there and then played [again at] Kalamunda. This was after I left school. One of my achievements, I was captain of the Kalamunda Football Club and we won the premiership in 1967. What else about school? Something will come up later on; I'll think about it.

**Did any of the kids tease you because your dad taught at the school?**

Well sort of not teased, no, I never really got teased but I think dad used to just make sure that if anyone could be made an example of, it was probably me and of course it made the other kids think I was, you know, I could handle it so I [didn't get teased]. The name Earp copped a bit of, you know I was always called Wyatt Earp,

that was just par for the course. I still do but you get used to it; that's water off a duck's back really.

**Okay, so can you please describe some of your memories, earliest memories, of the town; of Kalamunda?**

Well, I can remember when we used to come for school holidays before we lived here permanently, we'd go out to Walliston to stay with my grandparents there most Christmas holidays. My grandfather had an orchard and we'd pick fruit and I remember going up and watching the train go through the Walliston Station, the zig zag train. We used to run along beside it, me and my cousin Graham. You could walk for miles along that track and the train did come and go. That was always very interesting, we loved doing that. My uncle, Ted Saunders, had a great big [produce shed there]. He sold wheat and chaff.

(10:12)

It [was] a big shed and we used to get in there and play around, jump up over the stacks of hay and stuff that he had. He had big drums of molasses that they used to sell for the horses. We used to eat a bit of that with pollard, (laughs) strange thing you do as kids. That was before I went to school but my memories of Kalamunda, when I got here I was, oh, just getting to know the town. We used to play down in the creek where the park is now, Stirk Park. It was just a great big area of Kikuyu grass, really quite high, you know, probably full of snakes and things. There was a creek used to run through it and we used to go down there and play and catch leeches and dam it up and do all those things kids used to do; come home filthy dirty, late at night sometimes (laughs). Kalamunda was very free and easy then there was no question of not being able to roam around town. It was just a good place to live really. Some of the other things? I started tennis, we started playing tennis too in those early days. That was at the old tennis courts that are now behind the Kalamunda Cricket Club clubrooms. I'm not sure [when] but they transferred down to these tennis courts where the bowling green is now. So they [had] four (4) courts there and then the Kalamunda Club was nearby and then they opened a bowling green, and then after a while they wanted the ground for some more bowling greens and the tennis club shifted up to where it is now in Railway Road. But they were good days, playing tennis. We won some pennant matches when we joined the, I think it was called the Kalamunda - Mt Helena Tennis Association or something. Yes; so that was some of my early [days].

**Can you remember any of the shops?**

Oh, yes. I drew a bit of a map of that. [Refers to map]

**Okay.**

Yes, I do. I can remember up the top along Railway Road at the top of Haynes Street there was the Fruit Bowl; that was a little shop that was owned by the Roads [family], you could buy cool drinks there by putting money in a little slot and pulling them out of the cold water. Beside them in Railway Road there was Slatyer's, that was the Hills' Estate Agency, a little white building there.

Then opposite on the top of there was Thompson's Store and then there was a ladies dress shop next to that and a ladies hairdresser just down a little bit further, at the back of the old railway station where it is now.

The other way there was a store on the corner and Bavistock's Butchers next door to that, then the hotel which included the TAB at the time. Oh, no it didn't, that came later. And there was Hawley's Shoe Store and a men's hairdressers in the hotel then.

Then the Post Office was next to the hotel with a little bit of a gap between, then there was a garage on the corner opposite the Methodist Church there, then the Methodist church; and there were just a few houses up the rest of Railway Road.

I think the Catholic Church might've been built there in the 50s. I'm not sure about that but it's a fairly modern building. Then down Haynes Street there was Kostera's Garage on the south side and then Central Road; and there was a newsagency, Steere's Newsagency underneath there. I can't quite remember what was down this side but I think there were just mainly houses until you get to that little street that runs off, about opposite where all those big new modern, I think it's a village.

There used to be a shop called the Edwardine, Prunster's eventually had that as a greengrocery shop there for a while but there were some [other] people in it before Prunster's moved in. And then down where the liquor store is now, and perhaps even Bunnings, there was a couple of tennis courts. Kay's Kash and Karry, were on the corner. Oh, no; the Kookaburra Tea Rooms were on the corner. That's where all the kids used to hang out there - the Kookaburra Tea Rooms. It was a very popular spot.

(15:10)

**So that was the corner of Haynes Street and Canning Road?**

Yeah; just a little bit back you know, there was a little bit of space there. Then around the corner the Kash and Karry went a little bit further; it had a hardware store at the back. Then there was Brescasson shoemaker and next to that was a fish and chip shop; and then there was a house on the corner of Stirk Street. It was a very lovely nice house. It had lots of roses round the front of it, I remember that, they were very pretty. But over on the other side of Canning Road there were some houses; there were the Erb's. We were the Earp's and they were the Erb's!

**Okay.**

Then there were some Bennett's a little bit further up and then where the car park is opposite IGA was Crabb's first store. I was just doing this [map] before you came, if you went up a little bit further, I've forgotten the name of that street; Mead Street it is. On the corner there was Portwine's bakery, the corner of Canning Road. There were just houses, little houses, because some of the school kids used to live in them. And the Church of England; where was that? Church C of E was here, their hall was in front of that and there was a bookies shop [nearby, an] actual bookmaker. That TAB wasn't there when I first came but the bookmaker was there on the corner. There were houses all along here and then over the road was the (dog barking) church, Methodist church. I think there was a baker next, I don't know when that second baker arrived, he might've been there all the time (whistles at barking dog). We got to know the Portwine's pretty well and used to go up there and get into the bakery and get fresh bread and stuff like that when they were cooking it, and that was always good fun. Yeah; Kalamunda it's changed to what it is now. Oh, the ES & A Bank was down here on the corner too, the ES & A; the English, Scottish and Australian Bank. It's since become ANZ. There was a National Bank there too somewhere, I'm not quite sure where that was. That might've been up here I think [points on the map]. But you could drive up, [Haynes Street easily], [now] you can't move down Haynes Street with the traffic but you could ride your bikes up and down there without any hassles and we used to hold, when I was in the footy club, raffles for loads of wood in front of Mrs Findlay's house there. It was a very, very good lifestyle back then.

**Yeah, it's good to see with the map to sort of visualize it.**

Yeah. You can have that if you want. Mrs Findlay used to live there and she used to sell [homemade] pies. Used to love [them]; they were [great].

**So even though there was a bakery, there was still the market to have a pie shop and things like that? There wasn't much overlap?**

Oh, she just lived in a house and she used to just sell them at lunch time.

**Oh, okay.**

The bakery wasn't like it is now like you didn't go there to buy your bread because the baker used to come to your house every day and sell you bread. Just like the milkman used to deliver the milk every day, it was just part of the deal.

When we arrived at Kalamunda there was no water supply here then so I can remember them doing all the blasting around town, digging the trenches to put the big pipes in you know they'd uncover the rock and drill into it, then they'd set the charge. And they'd put big sheets of tin over the charge and then they'd blow a whistle and, oh, some of the explosions, you know, your house would get showered with stones and the big sheets of metal would go flying up in the air.

**I wouldn't have thought it'd be very safe to put the tin over the hole with explosives.**

No; well, they just put it just over where the charge was. I think it made the rocks crack up and then. I don't know what sort of machinery, I think they used to have front end loaders to dig it out but it was all, it was very labour intensive, I know that much.

(20:00)

When we were kids, the Kalamunda dump, the rubbish tip, was down; if you went up Headingly Road and just kept going it was over the hill and down the other side and everyone used to dump their rubbish [there]. We [once] found half a box of gelignite down there; the kids and I, and anyway we didn't know where it came from, just stick of gelignite, and we were able to get some detonators but we couldn't get any fuse so we made up our own fuse (laughs) using greaseproof paper and the gun powder out of crackers. We'd get the crackers and we made lengths of fuse and we took it down to; if you keep going down over past the dump you come to a creek. I don't know what it's called, but there was a rocky pool in there and I can remember we lit the fuse, very dangerous. We put the detonator into the stick of gelignite, lit the fuse and ran like crazy up behind a rock and [just waited, all of a sudden there was just a big bang, obviously]. And all these white, white pieces shot off, it certainly made a racket. We only ever used [one (1) stick], I don't know what happened to the rest of the box of [gelignite]. I think we might've given it to one of the plumbers we told them about it, but we certainly fired off one (1) stick of gelignite.

**Well that's pretty exciting (laughs) people can't do that now.**

No you wouldn't, no, but dogs used to roam the streets, we had a dog it would roam. I remember it had a fight in Thompson's store with another dog and Thompson hit him in the nose with a pick handle and put a big dent in his nose, he always had this big dent in his nose.

Dogs used to roam and all the kids used to ride their bikes and the dogs used to chase them. We used to ride our bike out to Victoria Reservoir and go swimming in there when it was [not used], they've decommissioned it. We used to go out there and have swims out there but it was a long way to ride for a swim. We used to go down to Watson's; Watson's had a house down, I don't know the name of the street, but it was down the hill on the other side there and they had a sort of a pool dug into

a creek and we used to go and swim in that quite frequently. But you know with all the [diseases] that go around now it must have been dangerous, get those diseases up your nose and things, but no one ever got [sick], not that I know of. And, on the corner of Canning Road, there was a swimming pool there owned by Mrs Edwards but we used to look at that pool all the time and wish we could have a swim in it but we weren't allowed to. My grandparents had made a swimming pool out in Walliston and we used to swim in that before we came to Kalamunda.

**So was it a big event when the Kalamunda pool was opened?**

Yes that was [a] very [big deal], going up there and being able to have a swim and mess around up there, [it was] very popular for a good while. I don't quite know what happened, I wasn't a very good swimmer but we used to go up there swimming and messing around of course.

I used to play a lot of tennis and cricket and footy and stuff. We used to actually, I can remember now, we used to actually drive over to Kelmscott pool to have a swim because it was one of the first built. We'd drive over there with family and friends and have a swim over in the Kelmscott pool. I'm just wondering, I know I swam in the Kalamunda pool but I don't know when that was built; it certainly wasn't there when we were at school because when we finished primary school I went to Governor Stirling High School. I was, along with others, [the first to move into] the new Governor Stirling High School before it was completed. We were back in the old Midland Junction High School [at first], I think the first year we shifted up to the new school. I see they're fixing that up now. It got full of rust cancer or something. So all the kids in that era we went down there, we never got to go to school at the Kalamunda High School because we'd all finished our schooling by then.

(25:11)

**So was it much different going to school in Midland?**

Oh yes it was.

**Mixing with other kids?**

Oh a lot more kids, yes. We've had some reunions down there over the last couple of years, very interesting to go back there and see them all, all from around that area. We used to have to catch the bus; Fred Ayling's bus and Jack Conrad, they both had a bus and they used to do two (2) trips home. I think they might have done two (2) in the mornings I'm not sure about that; because there were more kids up here than two (2) buses could hold but we certainly used to wait down at Governor Stirling while the first kids were brought to Kalamunda, then he'd come back and take a second load. The kids that lived out at [Pickering Brook and] Karragullen would be on [the first one], they had a long trip because Fred Ayling's bus was a very old bus and it used to really battle getting up the Kalamunda hill. We used to hop out the back door, because it had a back door on it, and run up and jump back on at the top of the hill, that's how slow it was going. We rode our bikes to Midland a couple of times but it was a fairly long hike for us then, it wasn't so bad going down the hill but coming up was always a battle.

We used to spend a lot of time down the zig zag, especially at that quarry down there, I think it's called the Boya Quarry, throwing, rolling boulders over that and we used to pick orchids; spider orchids and donkey orchids by the [bunch], it's just disgraceful when I think about it now that we'd do that. I don't know whether it destroyed them or not but it's sad to think we did that, but they were everywhere you could see them popping their heads up from a distance.

The zig zag was always an interesting place, I think they were still taking the railway line out, or at least the sleepers, some of those things are a bit hazy. I can certainly remember the train coming into Kalamunda station, I was only five (5) or six (6) then. We used to come to Walliston [and] dad would stop at the Kalamunda hotel and buy a couple of bottles of beer and normally he'd bring out a glass of lemonade for us kids, that was always a bit sort of exciting (laughs) waiting outside because they had the six (6) o'clock closing, all that kind of stuff.

**Did it take them long, after the train line closed, to take up the all the track from the zig zag?**

I spent some years away so I can recall there being sleepers there but I can't actually recall, when we moved to Railway Road I know we could play cricket because the sleepers had all gone but there were some stacked there I'm pretty sure. No I don't know how long that took I'm a bit hazy about what happened to the railway line because I was very young then.

**So other than all the sporting activities that you've mentioned before was there anything else that you did in your spare time, other than blowing things up and hanging around the creek?**

We all had gings in those days and we used to go and try to bring down twenty eights [parrots] and when the magpies were swooping we'd sort of try and round them up, but we never hit any, you know you'd fire a few rocks off. We did a lot of roaming around when I think about it.

When we used to go to Walliston my cousin was out there and we used to stay there and back in those days there were still tramps, you know, getting around old guys trudging their way through the bush. At the Walliston oval there was a little shed there and that was often a place where they would camp for the night, we'd take them fruit when we knew they were there. You wonder [now] whether it wasn't dangerous but never any hassles, they always appreciated getting something. So '48 they were still sort of getting over the War I think, and we used to see them up there and they used to talk to us.

It was one of my jobs as kid at home to chop the wood and we used to go and collect logs in the bush and I'd bring them home and we had a cross cut saw and I used to cut up lots of wood into foot blocks on the saw horse and split them, it was sort of one of my jobs.

(30:22)

Back then we used to climb a lot of trees too, I remember, [we would hammer] big nails in the side of trees and sort of build a step ladder up into the higher bits and build cubby houses up trees and things. When I think back you know, I probably wouldn't let my kids do that, but we did it. Throw a rope over and climb up a rope, it was never any fear, just did it. Yeah they were good days.

**Growing up, did you travel to Perth very often?**

Not when I was at school we didn't; we used to go into Midland more than Perth. We'd go down to Midland and mum would do a lot of the shopping down there; oh we did go to Perth I can remember now we used to love going into Boans because it had two (2) escalators and we used to roam up and down those escalators, drive everyone mad. But not just us, there were lots of kids used to do that. The other thing I remember is going into Coles' cafeteria and being able to push your tray along and pull the food out, put it on your tray. Did you used to do that?

**Yeah.**

Good fun. Used to always get a lot more than we were allowed to keep, but that was always fun. My grandmother lived in Cottesloe, and that was my father's mother, we used to go there a bit, should have kept that real estate it would have been worth plenty now. When I was about twenty (20), this is moving forward a bit, I tried to buy a block of land in Kalamunda but the banks just wouldn't lend money then unless [you had] a fair bit of collateral behind you. So they chopped up some of the ground for the golf club down there and I was going to buy a block but I couldn't, although I had a job I couldn't, none of the banks would lend me any money to buy it at that time; later on it became a lot easier of course.

**So after leaving school what work did you do?**

Well I joined the State public service and joined the Crown Law Department in 1959. There I spent forty (40) years working for the Crown Law Department, one way or another went right through the whole of the court system. I remember my first pay was thirteen pound (£13) that was a fortnight, and that was just as far as I was concerned a king's ransom. You know we were able to go down to the Kookaburra and book up milkshakes and had a running account there and we could pay Mary McInerney the money when it was due at each pay day.

I used to catch the bus every day, used to have to start work at eight (8) o'clock so you'd catch the bus at about quarter to seven (7) and I'd get there; being the messenger boy my first job was to walk down to the Post Office and pick up a big letter bag full of mail and just drag it back to the Supreme Court building where we were stationed. Yeah we did a lot of things in that big building, underneath the Supreme Court there's just a hive of strong rooms and tunnels and things and we used to roam around in there a fair bit. I can remember once, we were kicking the football in the corridor there one day and the judge was having a trial above us; and they could hear this thumping and they sent down someone and we had to stop. It was very interesting there, used to ride a messenger bike, you know a big basket on the front, that was one of my jobs and one of the things as a messenger boy was I suppose it was a badge of honor if you could ride up Hay Street against the traffic, it was a one way street Hay Street then, if you rode your bike up against the traffic.

(35:21)

I achieved that and I could ride up Mount Street without getting off, and that was not with any gears on the bike (laughs). I don't know whether that's very interesting about Kalamunda.

**So it was a long day having to catch the bus so early and I guess you'd get home about six (6) or something like that?**

Oh yes it was, it was a long day. You finished at I think it was strange hours, you started at 8:07am and finished 5:13pm some odd, but you signed the book and made sure you didn't go early. Then of course you had to get qualification for promotion so we'd head off to night school two (2) or three (3) nights a week over at the old Perth Boys and Girdlestone Girls over at Northbridge [to study for the] Diploma of Public Administration. So in between playing billiards and going to the pictures, I eventually became qualified for promotion (laughs).

**I guess with all those sort of attractions in the city that you wouldn't have had here.**

Oh yeah, well the Mayfair theatrette that used to just [continually] roll along with shorts and cartoons.

I can remember always getting home and being so pleased that mum had cooked a meal and left it on the wood fire and used to have that before I went to bed. Didn't have a hot water system as such then, we used to have to light the bath heater and then that was just a little fire by the bath. And it would heat the water up and the



water would run into the bath and you'd add cold water to it because it got quite hot. So the first two (2) or three (3) years that's all we had for heating water then dad built a solar hot water system. A very early sort of, but it worked pretty well because we used to have to pump water from the windmill to tanks around the house for our water and boil it all up, it always had a bit of a taste to it. There were no septic systems, we used to have the sanitary cart come once a week and that was always funny because we had a little toilet down the back and it was built out of weatherboard. I can remember some of the weatherboards were loose and if you threw a stone at them the boards would fall off. So [when] my sister was in there, we were always throwing stones and every now and then (laughs) a timber would fall off and she'd run out crying (laughs).

I was just thinking about my work life, it was quite an interesting one because I started in the records section of the Crown Law Department and then moved into the Crown Prosecutors Office and I watch *Crownies* there and that's a bit like it was even back then with Crown Prosecutors deciding on whether or not they'd proceed; do you watch *Crownies*?

**No I haven't watched it actually.**

It's quite interesting, especially when you've got a background in something like that, but yeah, it's very interesting. There's a lot of stuff that didn't happen that they go on with there because they're all young boys and girls. Back then there was very few women in the legal fraternity, they were mainly men. I used to travel around the whole state, right up to Broome and beyond, Albany and out to Kalgoorlie with the Crown Prosecutor, [I was] his Clerk. I sat through a couple of memorable trials [Beamish] and Button and they've both been since found innocent; but at the time I didn't think they were innocent

They were very, very interesting times then. I moved into the Magistrates' Courts. Jane and I got married and went to Port Hedland; that was our first stop at Port Hedland. We went to *Red Dog* the movie the other day and we were there in 1970 and that picture was sort of depicted in 1971 so we were sort of around the area when *Red Dog* was. In fact the Magistrate's wife, who was at Carnarvon at the time, his wife Mary sculpted the *Red Dog*. So we knew a bit about the *Red Dog*.

**(40:13)**

**Ok, so that's your working life, any other entertainment that was happening in Kalamunda as you were growing up or as an adult?**

Entertainment, that's right, the pictures were on in the hall; they were always very popular. We used to go there and they'd have two (2) movies and interval and one of the things we kids used to do was to go, they used to sell cool drinks in bottles and they'd give a two cent (2c) refund. So we used to go and ask the people if we could have their bottles so we could go and buy lollies and things, must have been very annoying a kid standing there waiting for them to finish their drink. Anyway after a while they decided they'd stop charging the extra two cent (2c) and getting refund so they just charged them and collected the bottle themselves. We weren't very happy about that, there were a few of us who took them away and got our money back down the shops (laughs). The pictures were always good fun, everyone would run around and mess about and roll Jaffas down the aisles, stuff like that. It must have driven the adults mad the kids playing up at the front, I know [now] it would have annoyed me.

I used to go to Methodist youth club, that was a good spot to be lots because lots of kids went up there from all denominations, they weren't just Methodists. There was

a Les Smith and there was a fellow by the name of Hunt, I've forgotten his Christian name, and their wives used to run it. Evelyn McCullagh who used to live in a little house just here, their house is up there in the History Village now, she was one of the ladies.

We used to go every Friday night there and there was a bit of fun, a bit of religion but mainly we used to play games because it was just in a little house then, that was before the Methodist Church built their hall. It was just a little sort of an old house, I think it used to be the manse, we had old furniture in there and used to cook up stuff on a stove. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed that, there must have been forty (40) or fifty (50) kids went along every Friday night.

And then they'd have camps, we'd go down to North Beach, there was a camp we used to go to down there and then down to Kwinana. It was always good fun at those camps because there was entertainment and people got together, boyfriends and girlfriends, you know people made friends with one another.

### **So that was more in your teenage years?**

Yes. Television didn't come to Kalamunda, to Western Australia until 1959 and I only know that because my brother was a radio technician, he built his own TV.

### **Wow that's pretty impressive.**

It was. He built it from *Radios and Hobbies* magazine and put it together and we turned it on and low and behold it worked. And so we saw the very first [TV], there was no cabinet it was just a big bulb there with all the valves and things glowing at the back but it was a genius thing to do at the time.

So we were one of the first with a telly because up in the, I don't know whether it was the men's hairdresser or the Hawley's shoe store, he bought a telly and he had it in the window of his shop. So people would go there, we would go there and take seats, like outdoor seats and sit on the pavement and watch the telly because you could hear it outside. Quite a few people you know, there could have been as many as fifteen (15) or twenty (20) people watching telly. We used to watch it from the Methodist youth club because on Friday night there was a show called Seventy Seven Sunset Strip in it. We used to go and watch that, I think it was condoned by the people, they all knew we were going down to watch that particular movie, it was all black and white but it was such a new experience.

When I was up at, before we came to Kalamunda when I was still at Muchea, because we were at Muchea then we to Bullsbrook and we used to go down to Pearce Air Force, the barracks there, on Saturday nights because they had pictures there for the servicemen and they used to let the public in. So we'd go down there in Steere's cattle truck of all things standing in the back, I think it was only six (6) or eight (8) kilometres. We were allowed in past the guard and they let us watch the movies in there, but when you were my age we were normally asleep by the time, but mum and dad used to enjoy it. We'd all sleep, that was before Kalamunda of course.

(45:23)

I met Jane in Kalamunda, that's my wife, her father was a railway engineer and he transferred from Geraldton where she went to school and transferred to Perth, so they moved into town. It was at basketball we met, playing basketball, she was a pretty good basketballer. The football club had a basketball team and so I played for that; and we were the roughest team because we sort of thought that football was a bit like basketball but it was very entertaining. Badminton, we used to play badminton and Jane used to play badminton as well and then things just developed I guess.

(break in recording)

Just looking here you asked about local identities in the area. I suppose Jack Kostera, who we were just talking about, he was the benefactor for the junior football club, he used to take us down to football matches down in Midland and Belmont and Bellevue, all those places free of charge every Saturday morning.

He was very good, they never played any games at Kalamunda oval because it was still too rough. We played on the grass down at those ovals, although some of them were pretty rough at Bellevue and places like that; but he certainly was an identity.

Ray Owen, he was a local Member of Parliament, he was also a real estate agent. Ken Dunn was a Member of Parliament for this district for a good many years, who did I say then – Ken Dunn, no Ray Owen was the Member for the district. He lived out at Pickering Brook, he was a Country Party member and then Ken Dunn ran against him and they had a tied election. I'm pretty sure they had a reelection because they called it a [court of] disputed returns rather than going through the first election, they had a reelection and Ken Dunn won by a handful of votes.

Ray Owen was a highly respected sort of guy from out there and then Ken Dunn, he did a pretty good job too. When you're at that age you don't really know what they do, they always turned up at footy shows and school shows and everything. And then George Spriggs took over from, I think Ken Dunn; he was another Pickering Brook guy. He was a rough diamond, I think he did a pretty good job as an MP.

Some of the others, Wally Earb was one of the best tennis players in Kalamunda, him and Gordon Sommers, he was another Kalamunda identity. Then there's Hedley Jorgensen, he was a very popular man in Kalamunda. They've named the old golf club Hedley Jorgensen park, he lived around town; I knew him from the golf club. He was one of those popular guys around town.

#### **Did he have property or what did he do?**

He was a federal policeman, I think he worked for the Commonwealth police, Headley. I think they all had War records and things like that and of course up at the pub, there was some characters up there, but I just can't remember some of their names but they were always entertaining. Keith Stove was another, he was of my generation, he had a sports car, that's the butcher's son, Milton Stove. He had a little shack down the bottom of the hill which we all used to go to and play cards and have the odd drink, a bit of an entertainment spot it was. We used to go to the drive-ins a lot, they were very popular in my day, there was no videos or anything like that then, there was television but all the movies were on at the drive-ins.

**(50:17)**

#### **So where was the nearest drive-in to Kalamunda?**

At Forrestfield there was one. It didn't close down so long ago, the Forrestfield drive-in but we used to go far and wide to the drive-ins, just depended where the movies were, used to go to the one in City Beach, or in that area, Wembley, Cannington there was one. We used to go down to Kwinana sometimes, just to watch the movies get out of town.

The drink driving rules weren't anywhere as nearly [severe as they are now], they're appropriate now but there was a lot more drunk driving in those days. I used to see it in court, like people could be absolutely drunk and they were hard, you had to have so much evidence against them before you could convict them, not like now you're virtually guilty until you prove yourself innocent. But drink driving was a bit over the top, even I might have been over the limit a few times, maybe.

**Just going back to when you were talking about some of the identities and the close election with Ray Owen and Ken Dunn, was it a political area? Was there much politics talked about?**

Well not really, he was a Country Party man and Ken Dunn was a Liberal so they were sort of aligned. I don't know whether there's ever been a Labor member in Kalamunda, I really don't know because I can only remember Ray Owen, Ken Dunn and George Spriggs. And now the latest bloke Day, so I suppose in the fifty (50) years I've been around that electorate –wise they've been only the four (4) members. Oh there might have been one between, yes there was, a fella by the name of Thomson, he was the Speaker but he, I think he fell foul of Sir Charles Court and he might have gone in as an Independent and that's when Day beat him, but I'm a bit hazy about that. You don't want to hear anymore about my working days, you're more interested in Kalamunda aren't you?

Community groups?

**Yeah I'm just thinking a bit more about entertainment, just going backwards in the interview, about the Kalamunda Show? Did you go to the Kalamunda Show?**

Oh yeah that was great. The Kalamunda Show was always good fun, like even when I went to primary school, you used to have the pipers running around and we'd follow them around as kids.

They used to have the log chops and they used to have those little cars, you used to whip around the outside of the oval, it was all dirt, they were little racing cars. They used to pump the petrol in with their hands, you know pump away and go around all the corners sideways that was always good fun. Back then they didn't have fireworks because every 5<sup>th</sup> November we had our fireworks night and that was always a big night, you know you would spend ages making up your bonfire; great big Guy Fawkes on the top of it. And because I had my birthday on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November a lot of my presents were fireworks and I was happy about that because we used to blow up the odd letterbox, not that it would ever blow them up, they weren't strong enough but you'd put them in there and they'd make a decent bang. And you'd have the Katherine wheels and the rockets firing into the air and if it was dry, if you had a dry night you'd get the odd grass fire started by the rockets.

The Kalamunda Show was always good fun and everyone used to get involved, there was cake making and flowers and fruit and there was always a dance that night. Everyone sort of, even the kids used to go up there and hang around and wander around outside, you never went in because that was all a bit formal. You'd roam around, play over at the War Memorial, down on the oval. It was a good life, yeah the Show was good.

What else, I was a Cub, a boy Cub over at the Cub hall there with Pat Hallahan, you know Pat Hallahan don't you? Have you interviewed him? He's a font of knowledge.

**Yes we did many interviews with Pat for the Historical Society.**

He was a Scout man, and there was a fella by the name of Harwood; not Harwood from the Crabb's, but another Harwood from down the hill. He was a Cub master and we learnt how to tie up our shoes and polish them properly and make things.

(55:14)

It was good fun on Saturday mornings. My cousin, Graham Wallis, his mother used to work at Thomson's and she used to ride a bike in from Walliston every day. There

was some pretty hard working people back then, they had it pretty tough. I can remember his dad and some other blokes we were building the house where she lived in Grove Road out there, it still stands. We used to have sheets of asbestos there, we used to cut them up with asbestos cutters, had no idea of the danger we were in. So I suppose that's why people of my age are sometimes catching that asbestosis because back then we used to, if you put asbestos into a fire, like a bonfire it blows up, it gets so hot it explodes.

Any other entertainment, the Methodist youth club, we had some dancing. We had dancing instructors come up and gave us dancing lessons at the Kalamunda Hall there, there was Junior Farmers. I was a member of Junior Farmers, we did some hay rides around, you know a horse towing a big sort of cart and all sit on the back of it. I think we went to Victoria Reservoir one time but the old horse, we had to all get off because the horse was getting a bit tired coming home.

Junior Farmers was something else, tennis, footy, cricket; routine stuff I suppose.

**So there must have still been a rural feel to the place to have a Junior Farmers group then?**

Yes it was, there were lots of orchards, I can remember Cliff Ferney and Portwine's they were in it. Jill Portwine she married one of the [other boys], oh I've forgotten the name of the people now; they had a farm down at the back of the airport I think they had pigs and sheep and things. We learnt how to dance, well you could do the Pride of Erin and stuff like that which was popular back then. Some of the other steps were a bit much for me, but some of the kids they went onto be pretty good dancers from those lessons we had. There was always a tennis coach up here, he used to coach us tennis.

**So are there any other community groups or organisations that you were involved with other than you mentioned?**

I'm just trying to think, oh darts, we used to play darts (laughs). That was very popular the darts, we used to drink a fair bit at the Kalamunda hotel. There was mainly football, there were a few girls that used to come along but it was mainly, I think going to hotels with girls was frowned on a bit back in those days; but the boys certainly went there. The drinking age was twenty one (21) until the Vietnam War came along. I missed out on the Vietnam War by a year being born in '43, they did national service up until about, when did that start 1960 didn't it? I think Vietnam. You did national service for six (6) months and then they stopped doing that and a couple of years later they had the call up for the Vietnam War but I missed out on that, a lot of my friends didn't they went off. Howard Ginbey, he lives out there on our property out in Walliston, he's got a bit of a vineyard; he went off to it and so did one of the Fletcher boys and Billy Daglish, they all went off; they all came back in one piece luckily. I don't know whether anyone from Kalamunda got killed in the Vietnam War but at least a handful of kids went off from Kalamunda and quite a few from school went too. Other entertainment, no I can't think of any other clubs that I was involved in.

**(1:00:13)**

**Ok well I'll ask about your own family, you've mentioned meeting your wife. When did you get married?**

We got married in 1970 in Kalamunda [Methodist] Church. We first went for a short stay at Beverley [I was] Clerk of Courts there, then I was appointed as Clerk of Courts at Port Hedland and we stayed up there right through those early

development years, all the Thursday Islanders were in town and it was very busy in the court up there.

We used to line up arrests on Saturday mornings in particular, forty (40) and fifty (50) sometimes, out the side of the courthouse and I used to have to go to work on those days. We were one of the first inhabitants of South Hedland, there was no telephones or anything out there then. You had to drive twenty five (25) kilometres to work from South Hedland, into Hedland because you had to go right around the back of the town and down a road and over a river and down through the light industrial area.

The road, just as a matter of interest, they used to send such heavy trucks into town that they dug quite a groove in the road. It was that (indicates) deep probably. In fact I took the car in one day and I put my front left wheel in that groove because the trucks were obviously wider than my car and I virtually didn't touch the steering wheel and drove nearly almost to Port Hedland right past the salt flats there because it just sort of kept you, [trapped in] the grooves.

She was a pretty rough old town then, like the Esplanade and Pier Hotels were rough, go down there and there were fights, all kinds of thing going on. We lived in South Hedland and knew all the policemen there, the courthouse and the police people just sort of mingled a bit together.

And then from there we went to Carnarvon where I was appointed as Clerk of Courts in Carnarvon and that's where we had our first son Andrew, he was born in Carnarvon. And then we were transferred to Beverley, back to Beverley where I worked, we had our second son [Matthew] there. Then they closed Beverley down because there wasn't enough work there because I was also the Manager of the Commonwealth Bank which was one of the agencies we ran and the bank closed down and transferred all its work to York. So we didn't have much court work to do.

So I was transferred to Moora and [we had] our third son Alistair and then after a few years there; we enjoyed all our country stints I've got to say they were all good fun. It's good living in the country but anyway we decided we'd come [back to the city], I got appointed as Clerk of Courts [at] Armadale and I was there for ten (10) years or so as Clerk of Courts and then went into head office and sort of got promoted through the ranks after forty (40) years and finished up in 2002. It was a good career, you look back on it and you think maybe I should have done something else but once you're in a department like that and you know the people, it fits you and you fit it so you just hang in there. You certainly get a good knowledge of how the courts [work].

### **So then you came back to Kalamunda?**

We lived in Kelmscott for ten (10) years. It's only this year we've come back here because mum had to go to a nursing home and she needed to sell the house to pay for the bond and we liked the house. So we sold our place in Kelmscott, sold it five (5) days before the bushfire went through down there.

(1:05:08)

So here we are back after, when did I leave 1970? So forty (40) years later we came back. So how are we going?

### **Good. So from what you were talking about before with Kalamunda from your childhood it would have changed dramatically.**

Oh it has, you know the traffic is just over the top now isn't and I counted up there are thirteen (13) coffee shops in Kalamunda now, thirteen (13) places where you can get coffee.

### **My goodness.**

Some are smaller than others, Muzz Buzz and they tell me the old Shire Office is going to have a Dome coffee lounge in it, so we might get up to fourteen (14). Are you a coffee person?

**I do drink coffee, yeah. It is interesting looking around Kalamunda and seeing all the different types of shops and the replication of shops too.**

It's quite a nice little shop. We enjoy going to the markets; especially the Sunday markets they're always pretty good fun. I was a member of Kalamunda Golf Club and a foundation member of the Hartfield Golf Club when it opened but then I got transferred away so I didn't keep my membership up.

I played golf at Pickering Brook for a few years and that's one of the good things in the country, there's always sporting clubs you can go to and it doesn't cost you an arm and a leg to join. Like I played at Gosnells for a number of years and it was quite expensive to play there, just the membership fee was expensive.

**Well the last question is what do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area, from either looking back at your childhood or now?**

Well back in the childhood it was just a great place to live, it was just free and easy and there was no, there didn't seem to be any pressure on us, there might have been on others but it was a very carefree sort of existence. I come back to it and find it's so much busier now and the traffic's so much more difficult to handle.

Sometimes we'd ride our bike down from Canning Road from the hall there and you could free wheel just about all the way down, straight across that intersection there where the roundabout is now and straight over Headingly Road you could almost get up the hill on the other side without stopping if you went through, there were so few cars around then, you wouldn't [certainly] get hit. We used to do that a bit, just silly things. But the traffic [now is very heavy] the traffic noise along Railway Road is a bit scary at times, there's some very fast; noisy drivers I don't know if they're going fast but their cars are certainly very noisy. What else? There seems to be a lot of old people in Kalamunda (laughs) and I've joined them (laughs).

There was one other thing that happened to me my first week at [work] I got very sick at work one day and I came back and dropped into see Dr Jamison who'd just come across from South Africa. He had his surgery just over the road from where the Muzz Buzz is (Canning Road), just a little bit up from there, I think there was another doctor Burnie, I think was the [only other] doctor in town but I went to him and dropped in on the way home and I was sent off to the Mount Hospital to get my appendix out that night. They nearly burst on me so that was quite interesting.

Mum and dad were away on a trip around Australia at the time and I was sort of batching with my brother at home and he had to take me down to the Mount Hospital and they took my appendix out that night. That was a bit hair raising.

What else is on this list here?

**I guess, so even though,**

I've got three (3) grandchildren.

**Oh ok, thanks. So even though Kalamunda's got busier do you think it's kept a similar feel or a bit different feel to other places?**

(1:10:01)

Yes I think perhaps it is a bit more commercialised than it was then, like at Thomson's you didn't go and select your own food. People at the counter would serve you and look after you, there was no self-serve stores around. Same at Crabb's you'd just go to the counter and ask for a pound of sugar and they'd take it out of a bag and make a pound. Yes it's a lot more commercialised but I guess that's to be expected. It's a lot more advanced in the way of shopping opportunities. The History Village is very good, a lot of volunteer work around the place. The walk, the old railway line walk is just marvelous any town that has a walk through it is blessed really. We walk the dog most days along there, it's very pleasant. That's an achievement, and the new Zig Zag Centre. They're [good] additions. But certainly it hasn't got the feel like, it's changed like there's no; you don't know the people that own the shops, or I don't because I haven't been here for long. But back then everyone knew who you were and you knew everybody, and a fair bit of their business too especially their kids around town and how they got on with each other. There's still a lot of them live here too, you know that they're here but you don't see them, because you can't recognise them; you'd have to have another reunion. We've had a couple of reunions here at Kalamunda which have been very good. All those people are sixty five (65) plus.

**Oh on the break, when we had a break, you mentioned something about the milk depot.**

Oh yes you went out Canning Road where the Woolies now is there used to be the Masters milk depot and we used to often go there when they were loading up milk when we were in town to get a bottle of milk to drink if you were really thirsty because the milk was also delivered to the school in those little bottles back in those days. They used to go bad in the sun and you were forced to drink them almost; but a lot of people tipped them out.

Of course the polio epidemic came and went when we were at school, that was very scary. A few kids I knew went down with polio. And there was a garage there as well called Lush's Garage somewhere near Woolies but I think they closed up and shifted up to where the service station is at the top of Lesmurdie Road.

You think you'll be able to get something out of that?

**Definitely, I think so. Thank you very much.**

Interview ends: 1 hour 11 minutes 11 seconds



**Oral History interview**

**Jill Farrant**

**Interview date: 27 August 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011 my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Jill Farrant for my Curtin university thesis project of the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**So I'll just start off with your name and your birth date please Jill.**

Jill Patricia Farrant, 14 April 1949.

**Can you tell me a little bit about your family, please?**

Ok. Well I was born in Midland. There was a small hospital in Sayer Street I think at that time. I've always lived in Gooseberry Hill. My grandfather, who was John Farrant, was overland telegraph officer at Eyre's Sand Patch near Eucla and that's where he met my future grandmother whose father was the telegraph station master. They got married in 1883 in Unley in South Australia and had ten (10) children. My father John Lascelles Farrant was born in Gooseberry Hill in 1897. He married my mother Lilian Rose, nee Taylor, in April 1935. They had four (4) daughters of whom I am the youngest. My father was a chronic asthmatic and ran a small dairy farm and orchard selling milk, cream, fruit etc to supplement our income, and worked as a general handyman throughout the Maida Vale, Gooseberry Hill area. My parents supported my three (3) older sisters, the eldest through business studies to become a receptionist for the Hills Estate Agency in Kalamunda. She was employed by Mr Slatyer senior and later his son Mr Hugh Slatyer. She then married and had two (2) children. The next two (2) sisters became primary school teachers before marrying and having their children. They had four (4) and two (2) children.

**Excellent. So your family goes back a long way in this area.**

Yes, it does (laughs). I'm up to earliest memories I think if I've skipped a few there.

**So what are your earliest memories of Gooseberry Hill and of Kalamunda?**

Ok. I clearly remember Haynes Street which was the centre of Kalamunda in those years. At the top of Haynes Street where the library now stands was a small fruit and veggie place run by Tom and Wyn Rhodes and it was called the Fruit Bowl. At the other end of Haynes Street where it joins Canning Road were the Hills Estate Agency and the Kookaburra Milk Bar. The milk bar was a popular meeting place for teenagers. There was a post office but very few shops. I recall that Hastings, the drapers shop, was run by Mr Beresford. A hardware shop where *Thai On The Hill* now operates was a very busy place and my father used to buy a lot of his handyman requirements there. I can't recall the name of the previous owners but remember later that Mr Faranda owned it. It eventually became Walker's Hardware before moving downhill a bit.

**So just going back to when you mention the Fruit Bowl. Was that shop supplied by local orchardists?**

Yes, I think it would've been. I don't know whether the owners went to West Perth Markets to get things like bananas and things that you couldn't grow here, but it was a stall rather than a shop. It was quite primitive really (laughs).

**So were there houses on Haynes Street as well as businesses?**

I don't remember any houses, no. I think there was Kostera's Bus Depot further up the hill. There was Stove's the butcher on the left hand side as you're going up that Mr Stove owned and that's all that springs to mind.

**I've heard mentioned by other people about the tennis courts. Were the tennis courts still there when you remember?**

Yes; they were sort of behind the Kookaburra Milk Bar and then the Rowe Chemist was on the other side, on the other corner where the ANZ Bank is; so that was R-O-W-E. That was there for a long time.

**I'm just trying to get a bit more of a picture of the Kookaburra Milk Bar. Did you go there often growing up?**

(5:01)

Well, because teenagers hung around there my parents didn't really like me going there very much, but it was just a shop at street level. You walked in and there were little tables and chairs on the left where you could sit down and it basically only; I suppose you'd call it a deli these days. It sold milk shakes and nothing criminal ever occurred there but some of the older boys who could drive and were a bit lairy, hung around. So a lot of parents of girls didn't really like them going there too much. And then on the right hand side as you walked in was all the counters where they made the milk shakes and sold all their wares; and then the tennis courts were out the back.

**Ok. Were they owned by the same people?**

I'm not sure.

**Very interesting. Can you describe your schooling, please?**

Yeah. I went to Maida Vale Primary School for seven (7) years. My mother used to teach embroidery there to the girls every Thursday so for the years before I started school I used to go every Thursday on the back of her push bike. It was a small school, possibly a total of fifty (50) students from Infants, which is now called Year 1, up to Standard 6 which became known now as Year 7. I then attended Kalamunda High School until I completed my Junior examination which is Year 10 equivalent now. To get there I rode my bike to the house opposite Maida Vale Primary School where a lady called Miss Davis ran a small post office agency. She allowed some students to leave their bicycles in her garden while we caught the school bus up to Kalamunda. The bus took us up and back to Kalamunda High School. Once I passed my Junior Certificate I went to Governor Stirling Senior High School because Kalamunda was only a junior high school, you couldn't go on, where I completed my Leaving Certificate, now Year 12. I still rode my bicycle to Miss Davis's house and then the Governor Stirling School bus collected us and took us to West Midland and brought us back. At Maida Vale Primary School we used pencils until Grade 4 when we were allowed to use ink wells and pens (laughs) with nibs. How old am I! The desks were designed with a hole to take a removable ink well. The Infants' class building was brick but the other classrooms were called prefabs as they were prefabricated elsewhere and then placed on site. They had wooden stairs up to the entrance to make them a permanent fixture. They were very hot in summer. In Infants my first teacher was Miss Bragg and then in Grade 2 my teacher was Mrs Iris Dale, a well-known artist in the district. She's actually still alive, she might be worth talking to. There were some children in primary school from very poor families. No one was well off then but children from the poorest families never wore shoes

and seemed to suffer from boils quite a lot, you know, carbuncles and things like that. As I got into the higher grades several children from migrant families joined our classes. I recall Polish, Italian, Dutch, Czech children with very little English language skills.

**So how did they go at school?**

I guess luckily because it was primary age, children seemed to pick up a second language really quickly. They struggled at first but we were all encouraged to help them out. One of them is now actually married to Kim Beazley. I think she was from Czechoslovakia but I'm not sure.

**Where did they settle? Did they live in Maida Vale?**

Round Maida Vale, yeah; more towards where High Wycombe is now but still this side in Maida Vale most of them.

**Very interesting.**

That's all I remember about schooling unless you've got any questions.

**Were there many, I'm just trying to clarify, with the classrooms. Did each year have a different classroom or were there a couple of years in the same classroom.**

Oh, that's true. In Infants, as we called it, it would've been Grade 1 and 2 so it was Infants and what we called Standard 1; and we still had Miss Bragg the sole teacher but the room was sort of divided into the two (2) age groups.

(10:03)

I know if we got something right she had these little boiled lollies that were in the shape of a fish and then rolled in sugar, so we had to do something really well to get one of those. Around the room she'd made big teaching aids to teach the phonetic sounds so she'd have like, she'd shape like an apple and then she'd have AP in the middle and EA in the shape of a peach so that we learnt how to pronounce two (2) vowels together, or something like that. When we moved from the Infants' building and went across to the prefab I think Grades 3, 4 and 5 were all in one room with one teacher and just some mobile screens that didn't go very high up, just so you weren't distracted from the class next to you. Then in the final year it was 6 and 7 were in the one room as well. I don't remember 6 and 7 being divided; we were almost taught the same.

**Were there many kids who you went to primary school with that went to Kalamunda High and then Governor Stirling?**

There was a lot went to Kalamunda High but then it dwindled to the number that went on to Governor Stirling.

**So people sort of went to work or a trade.**

I think a lot of the boys went off to do trades when they got through Year 10 at Kalamunda. I don't think there was anyone that went on. I went on to do six (6) weeks at Teachers' College before I decided that wasn't the route I wanted to follow, and I think there was only one other person from Maida Vale Primary School at Teachers' College then.

**So what did you do after finding out you didn't want to be a teacher?**

I sat for the Public Service exam because I thought, 'oh, I'll just join the Public Service while I decide what I'd like to do', and I stayed there for thirty eight (38) years (laughs). Then I sort of retired just before I got to fifty five (55) from the one department I'd always worked for and did some projects to renovate the house. And then decided that I needed to do something else so I looked for a part-time job and I'm now back in the Public Service with Quarantine.

**What was your role in Public Service before then?**

When I started at Defence I started at Midland and it was called Five Base Ordinance Depot and it was a supply depot for the Army. And it supplied everything from clothing, boots, right through to generators; everything really that they needed. All the Army units in Western Australia used to come to Midland and order their stores. I did that from '67 when I started work through to '69 and then I got transferred to Melbourne for a year. From Melbourne I worked there for that year in the Pay Section and Defence at that time had a huge computer room, because computers were massive in those days and all the pay was on computer and we just had to check anomalies that got fired out by the computer. Then I took twelve (12) months' leave without pay and went travelling overseas, came back, put my name down again with the Public Service and got selected to go back to a similar role at Five Base Ordinance Depot. I stayed there til 1975 when I got promoted to Swan Barracks in Francis Street in Northbridge and I worked in Human Resources. Then because the building was listed I think for demolition, but I think most of its gone but the façade's still there, they moved us to what's now called John Septimus Roe building on the corner of Adelaide Terrace and Victoria Avenue. I stayed in Human Resources a couple more years and then I became Defence Security Officer until they moved us to Leeuwin Barracks at East Fremantle; and I was there until I finished working for them.

(15:01)

**You had a few different roles, so that made it interesting.**

Yeah; that's right (laughs).

**With the exam. You sat the Public Service exam; did you have a job in mind or do they put you somewhere?**

No. When you sit for the, I think it's the same now. When you sit for the Australian, the Federal Government, Australian Public Service exam they just put you on an order of merit on how you performed and as vacancies occur in the Public Service at base grade, it's only used for base grade recruitment, they would then offer you a job. If you didn't like it you could refuse but I think you only got three (3) refusals and you were struck off (laughs); but I accepted the first offer. I was quite keen on accepting that because it was so close to home. I didn't know how to drive yet so someone had to drive me to and from work and three (3) of my uncles worked there. They were returned servicemen from the Second World War so I think my parents thought my uncles would keep an eye on me with all those soldiers around (laughs).

**I'll go back to more of your growing up years. What did you and your family do in your spare time?**

I don't know if I have any notes on that. Oh yes, I did. I just started off by saying I don't think we had much spare time. We were all busy helping, well in my case,

helping parents on our farm. My aunts, uncles and cousins used to visit us on weekends and I loved to walk up through the bush to the zig zag and to a nearby waterfall. We just made up our own games and played chasey and hidey; these were for outside games. At night some weekends we would play Ludo or Dominos as a family and listen to the big wireless in the dining room. We had this old valve wireless that used to sit over there and we could hear the BBC news and nice music. The Parents and Citizens' Association at Maida Vale Primary used to put on a film night once a month and we would sometimes go to the school and watch the film. It was outside so you could only have it when the weather was warm and they were black and white films at that time; didn't have colour. I think the first colour film I ever saw was when my eldest sister, I was about eight (8), she took me to Perth and we saw South Pacific. When I was older my girlfriends and I used to catch a bus into Perth and go to discotheques but that was a lot older (laughs). The last bus from Perth left at 11 o'clock so they were pretty early nights (laughs) home. We rarely went to Perth when I was a child. Dad never came with us as he had too much to do on the farm but mum would take us to Perth on the bus and we would go to Boans for our lunch. I don't know if you remember where Boans was. It was sort of where Myer is now and it went through from Murray to Wellington [Streets]. Mum always chose Boans because in summer we could go to the cafeteria, which was on the highest floor, for our lunch and she could look out the windows to the hills and see if there was any smoke. If there was smoke we'd have to go straight back and get a bus and miss lunch (laughs) because that meant there was a bush fire up here of course. It was a treat to go to Perth for us and maybe we went four (4) times a year.

**And during the school holidays?**

Yes; it would've been. Yes.

**Did you go into Kalamunda much when you were younger?**

No, not really. We mainly went to Kalamunda if dad needed something from the hardware shop. Most of our shopping we did in Midland because there weren't that many shops in Kalamunda then, yeah. So Hastings for clothing and that's it. I don't even remember them being, I don't think there was even a petrol station. I think we had to go to Midland for fuel for dad's old car; he had a 1923 Willys Overland. We had that til 1964 when he finally invested in a Volkswagen Beetle.

(20:04)

I'm just trying to think what else we did. When I was at high school my girlfriends that weren't too far would walk over here or I'd walk to their place; and that was it really. I guess because there were four (4) of us we just occupied ourselves. But there were lots of wild flowers on the zigzag then and there wasn't a rule about picking them. We didn't dig them up but we used to pick a bunch and bring it home for mum.

**Did you mention the difference in ages between you and your sisters?**

Oh, no, I didn't. My elder sister was born in 1936 and then the next one was born in 1939 and then the next one was born in 1942 and then there was a seven (7) year gap til me.

**So you were all similar ages.**

Yes. Well I remember my eldest sister living at home and then when she met her boyfriend who later became her husband, she went to I suppose flat or board with a

family in Kalamunda. So I can only vaguely remember her being home. We used to do a lot of embroidery at night and help mum with cooking. Dad used to milk the cows morning and night of course, and when he brought the milk bucket up he'd tip it into these big white enamel milk dishes and stand it outside on the windowsills because you can see they're quite wide, and they had a flyscreen that came up to keep any insects away. After the milk had stood for a while the cream all rises to the surface and then mum would bring it in and put it on the wood stove and scald the cream, and when it was cool skim it off; and we'd put it in glass jars and sell it. I think dad got one and sixpence for a jar of scalded cream and we just had certain customers around that bought it. Then in the 60s when the Milk Board was created they had to go out and inspect all dairy farms, and unless you had milking machines and white washed and sanitised your milking shed you weren't allowed to sell milk or cream or anything. They were worried about people catching something, so that was discontinued then.

**Did you have many people coming through who came up for holidays; came up to the hills for holidays?**

Well apparently before mum and dad were given this house in '35 by my father's mother, this used to be a holiday house. Originally how this house happened, my grandparents owned two hundred (200) acres of land and because my grandfather was a land agent in the City, he had a room in St Georges Terrace and you couldn't commute daily at that time, so he came back to the farm, to my grandmother on weekends. He employed a farm manager and he told the farm manager that he could build a cottage on the property. And the farm manager decided to build it here, because this was the lowest part and he thought it would be good for water. So he put a couple of wells in to get water and when my parents, well, when my grandmother didn't run the farm anymore and didn't need the manager, this cottage was left empty; so my grandmother used to let friends come and stay here for holidays. I think later she rented it out as a holiday let. I think the Drabble's and the Zimpel's, who are quite well known Perth families, used to come and have their holidays here. Zimpel's Arcade was named after the Zimpel family.

**What entertainment did you have more as an adult, because you were working in Midland and in the City? You mentioned going to discos. Was there anything else that you did?**

Not really. I joined a badminton club at Forrestfield; did that for a while. Later, when the cows were no longer around dad leased our hundred (100) acres to a riding school, and I liked horses so I used to "live" at the riding school and help out with saddle repairs and taking groups on trail rides and helping teach children lessons, you know, horse riding lessons. That was it really. I was a bit of a tomboy (laughs).

(25:30)

**Before we move on, I've just had a thought. Did you have any particular chores you had to do on the farm? You mentioned helping your dad. Was there anything that was your particular job?**

No, probably not. Probably because I was the youngest I got off lightly, so I think, I know from what they tell me, my older sisters all had to work harder than I did. So, no I just remember mum always had, and dad, always had vegetable gardens so I used to help with planting, but I don't think you could call it work (laughs).

**When and where did you meet your husband?**

Don't have one. No. I skipped that question (laughs).

**Do you see your nieces and nephews?**

Yeah; I see my nieces and nephews more now than I see my sisters actually; yeah. One niece has bought a house in Traylen Road in Kalamunda recently, so I see her a lot. My two (2) nieces from my eldest sister, one lives in Bullcreek; I see her very often, and the other one lives in Maddington about to move to East Cannington. I don't see her so often but a few times a year. Then the four (4) children from my next sister, I see them a lot. One's at Trigg, one's in Ellenbrook and one's at Henley Brook. The youngest one who's actually their adopted son lives at Esperance so I don't see a great deal of him. The brother of the niece that bought in Kalamunda is building his own home at Stoneville so I see him and his family a lot as well. I think because of the gap in age between my sisters and myself, and because they're in an era where girls met their husband, got married, lived happily ever after, we hope, their lifestyle is very different to mine where I worked all my life and was quite independent. So I've got a lot more in common with nieces and nephews and my eldest niece is only ten (10) years younger than me so I've just got more in common with them. The second eldest sister lives at Busselton now so I don't see her a lot because of the distance, but I see the one at Redcliffe and the one at Greenwood fairly often.

**Well this sort of relates to the question earlier but how has the town centre or Kalamunda town centre changes since your first memories?**

Oh, ok. I have put some notes on that. Kalamunda's changed markedly since my earlier recollections, not physically only but culturally. Kalamunda was regarded as being out in the sticks when I was growing up and most people were not well off financially at all. Everyone recognised each other in the street and there was a community bonding amongst the long term residents. Most people used to travel to Midland to do their main shopping as there was little choice in Kalamunda then, which I've mentioned before. I remember Stove's the butcher; Hastings the drapery place; Fruit Bowl that I mentioned; the Kookaburra Milk Bar; Hills Estate Agency; the hardware shop and the Kalamunda Hotel.

**And they're relatively still there, the buildings are still there.**

Yeah; and the only other note I had was, I can just recall a steam engine on the zigzag, which our house faces, like from where you've parked you'd look straight up at the zigzag. Well you would've seen that when you went for a drive. My mother said that the engine that I recall was removing the railway lines from the track as the train was no longer operating. Apparently when the main steam train ran my parents used to keep buckets of water out the front and hessian bags, and because it was a steam train it used to throw sparks out.

(30:08)

There was no fire brigade or volunteer fire brigade because there was just nothing. When I was growing up you couldn't see a house from here anywhere on the hills. So they would watch after the train went past, they'd sit out there and watch; and if they saw smoke they'd run up with their buckets which is quite a long way and whack the fire out before it got hold (laughs). So that's all I had for notes really but prompt my memory if there's anything else.

**I'll ask a few more questions. You mentioned some local businesses. Can you remember some of the local identities in the area, either then or -?**



I think at Hastings was a Mr Beresford and a Mr Backhouse. Hills Estate Agency I believe was started by Mr Slatyer senior and I think his name might have, no, I'm not sure what his Christian name was, but his son Hugh Slatyer took it over and ran it until, well, probably 80s; 1970s or 80s. Then I think it got bought out by the Professionals so the Slatyer's lived in Gooseberry Hill in Lenori Road, so they were a very well established family. The other families I remember were the Sherborne's and Sherborne Road is named after their family. In Watsonia Road were the Wardle's; in Sadler Drive there was only the one widow, Mrs Hauser. She only had one son; he lives down Watsonia Road with his family now.

In Kalamunda I remember, well Mrs Dale that I mentioned was my primary school teacher and she still lives there. And at Maida Vale Primary the other family I remember were the Birt's from Maida Vale who were a very poor family and the Wilson's who lived not far from them who were also poor. I remember the first Italian girl at school I remember was Maria Saltieri and her brother Dominic I think is an Assistant Commissioner of Police now. Later on, probably when I was in Grade 4, the Stretton family moved to Maida Vale and he worked at the Perth Airport. The Brandis' were an old family in Maida Vale; the Sutton's; the McCortrie's. It wasn't a very big school. There was the Stewart family, as far as I know not related to Stewart's Pest Control, and they lived; when you go past what's now called BWS down at the intersection going up Kalamunda Road on the left, Miss Bragg our primary school teacher lived in there and the Stewart's lived in there. West Terrace used to be called Albina Road.

**I didn't know that.**

Yeah, I think it was West Terrace. If you turned into Albina and went a fair way up it changed to West Terrace; and I'm not sure why they changed the whole name, the whole street later on. The first Dutch family I remember were the Van Hamersveld's and they lived, when you go across that big intersection down there near the service station, you go across into Hawtin Road. They owned that orchard, there's still some of the orchard left there on the right. And they had three (3) boys, John who I didn't know because he was older; Robert who was a year older than me and Joseph who we called Josh who was a year older than me at primary school. He calls himself Joe now; he still lives in Forrestfield.

**Do you remember when they came to the area?**

Well certainly before we started school so probably '53. So Joe might be worth an interview what he remembers, he's got a pretty good memory. Just trying to think more up the hill in Kalamunda, who I remember for families. I think I mentioned Mr and Mrs Stove that had the butchers. No, sorry; blank (laughs).

(35:19)

**That's fine.**

Oh, Mrs Dale that I mentioned, her parents were Mr and Mrs Wells and they were a very old family. I think my grandfather and Mr Wells were quite good friends and I remember not long before Mr Wells died, my dad took us up there and he went in and sat on the bed and had a chat to Mr Wells.

**It's good to get a list of people's names, so you know, some of the prominent families in the area.**

And I can't remember if in Whistlepipe Gully or Piesse Brook or an unusual name like that but Mrs Dale still lives in the original homestead. Her daughter Robin who's an artist and teaches art, I think at Forrestfield High, she looks after her mum. She lives in the homestead as well.

**Very interesting, thank you. Have you or your family been involved in any community groups or any organisations in the local area?**

No, not really. Dad was very reserved so we didn't really do that sort of thing; no. All I've done community-wise was donate some of dad's memorabilia to the History Village a few years ago; that was it.

**What sort of items were they?**

Well when a fire came the men used to put knapsacks on full of water and just go around and spray, it was a pretty small effort against some of the fires but he had about three (3) of those with J L Farrant painted on the back and just some old farm equipment that was no use around here anymore, rusting away I thought it may as well be painted up and used.

**It's good to have it still in the community and be seen by people.**

Yeah. I must go to the History Village and have a look at it.

**Excellent. Well, last question. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

I'm very biased because I just love it.

**That's alright.**

I think because it is in the hills makes it special. You feel like; I mean you hear a lot of people say if you're going to live in Perth you should only live in the hills or on the coast because there's nothing in between (laughs). Don't tell my sisters that but I think they live in the nothing in between. So I think it's the fact that it's on the hills there still, because a lot of it's been kept special rural, especially around here, there's still nice size blocks where you can still have a few, you know, animals, livestock if you want, chooks. And although it's changed a lot, because I would say Kalamunda's quite affluent and if you look at some of the homes in Gooseberry Hill it's obviously very affluent; you just feel like you've left the city behind as you start to head up the hill. That's the feeling I get.

**It's different to other places isn't it?**

It is isn't it? But maybe you're a bit biased as well (laughs).

**I think so (laughs). It is good to get people's opinions and even though you're biased, that's fine. It's what you think. That's why you live here I guess as well.**

It is; yeah. Well I bought my own place in Lane Road, Kalamunda which was on a corner block just behind where Woolworth's is now, as you head out. And I lived there from '81 until '92 and it just never felt the same as being this side. So when I got the opportunity to buy this back, because mum and dad had sold this in the '60s because they couldn't pay the land rates anymore; but the man that bought it kept it

as an investment and then later subdivided all the blocks off but the arrangement was that mum and dad could live here and maintain the property as long as they were able. So when mum was no longer able I rang him up and let him know that mum was in a nursing home and he asked to meet me for lunch to discuss options. And I had been living here to care for mum until that point so I thought it was going to be 'Jill get your marching orders' and instead of that he offered me first option to buy it back from him, which I did. So I sold Lane Road which became the deposit for this. And then when I retired from Defence I paid out the gap. So it's mine now.

(40:26)

**Yeah; it's nice to come back to where you started.**

Oh, it's lovely and it's full of happy memories. We're a happy family so it's good to sort of come home and, you know, I feel like mum and dad's presence is still around.

**Excellent. Now is there anything else you want to add to the interview before we finish?**

No. I just wish you all the best with your thesis.

**Well thank you for your time in giving me the interview.**

You're welcome.

Interview ends: 40 minutes 55 seconds

**Oral History interview**

**Ailsa Harwood**

**Interview date: 10 June 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2011, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Mrs [Alisa] Harwood for my Curtin university thesis project: The role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**Could I just start off with your name and your date of birth, please?**

My name is Ailsa Harwood and I was born on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April 1937.

**Can you tell me a little bit about your family please, your parents?**

Yes. My father came to Australia from Scotland in about 1926, celebrating his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday at about the time he arrived. He came for two (2) years (laughs) but it was twenty six (26) years later (laughs), before he returned home for a six (6) month visit for his mother and father's golden wedding celebration in 1952. My mother was born in Coolgardie in 1911 and her early teen years she lived in Kookynie which is a gold mining town north of Kalgoorlie, east of Menzies and south of Leonora. Her maiden name was Giles and where they lived, Kookynie is now a ghost town virtually, but the hotel; there is one hotel left and that was the home that they lived in because their father was a hotel keeper, so that still functions as a hotel in that town.

**Did you say their Christian names?**

Yes, my father's name was James and my mother, James Crabb that was, and mum was Ada Giles.

**Do you have any siblings?**

Yes, I have two (2) brothers, one older brother David, four (4) years older and a younger brother Don, who's twelve (12) years younger than me.

**Were you born in the Kalamunda area?**

Yes, I was born in Kalamunda, in the home where we lived and I have spent my whole life living in Kalamunda.

**Why did your father decide to leave Scotland?**

Well, I've only just discovered recently from a cousin that visited here, and they were a fairly large family, lived in a very small house and she said, 'you know the real reason why your father came because there just wasn't enough room for them to all live in the house'. And she said, 'as it was', she said 'he worked night shifts, so he worked all night and slept during the day and he actually shared a bed with his brother who worked during the day' (laughs). And she said there was an uncle had gone to Scotland to visit them and he said 'well, why don't you come out to Australia with me?' And on the spur of the moment, just like that he said 'yeah, why not'. This cousin that was here recently she said 'I think it was an opportunity for him to sort of try something different', you know. So, that was like as she said, they just came out; you know how in those days they came out cheaply, ten (10) pound poms sort of thing (laughs) they were called. He was just going to stay for two (2) years and then go back again but of course things changed (laughs).

**So how did your parents come to arrive in Kalamunda, decide to live in Kalamunda?**

Well when dad first arrived he actually stayed with his uncle in East Fremantle and, you know, he had to find work and of course coming to a strange country; and he looked in the paper and there were jobs fencing up in the country and things like that and he thought, oh, that might be something that might be good. And his uncle thought, oh, goodness me; that's no good for a young chap just come out from Scotland and going up into all the heat and everything. So he had a friend who was Mr Nestor and he lived in Kalamunda and he was a butcher, and he was wanting to take on somebody as an apprentice so he approached dad and said 'well, would you be interested in coming to Kalamunda as an apprentice butcher?' So he came to Kalamunda and he lived in varying places around the town and he tells me that his first place where he stayed was in Stirk Cottage.

**Oh wow.**

Yeah (laughs) and he actually boarded with Mr Nestor's mother. So that's how he came to Kalamunda and that's what he was doing.

(5:10)

Then how he met mum was, her family; she lost both her mother and father within six (6) months of each other and she was just a teenager. And she was staying, living with an aunt that really she wasn't very happy doing, and when she was nineteen (19) she decided that she wanted to get out and away from where she was living. And she saw a job advertised in the paper where somebody, a Mr Nestor in Kalamunda wanted a domestic. So she came to live with Mr Nestor, who was the butcher and she lived with him as his housekeeper and of course that's where they met.

**Very nice. So we'll now talk about your memories of Kalamunda, going on to a slightly different topic, unless you had anything else to say about your family.**

Well, not at this stage.

**Okay. So what are your earliest memories of the town and Kalamunda generally?**

Well, having lived here all my life and in Canning Road I just remember a quiet little street that went past our front door and we didn't have, there wasn't a lot of traffic in those days, there was actually still a few horse and carts. Haynes Street was still classed as I suppose the main street but it was different things in those days, it was before all the shops. There were tennis courts down on the bottom corner, down the bottom of Haynes Street and going up Haynes Street. There were quite a lot of tennis courts actually, a lot more than finished up in later years that was just a couple, but there were about five (5) I think and they went up Haynes Street. And then there was a blacksmith halfway up the hill and then there was a little tearooms and that would be sort of situated where the Last Drop is now, just up on the top of the hill and Mrs Finlay ran a little tearoom and a little cake shop. I've got passionate (laughs) memories about that place, every Friday when I was going to school we had a pie for lunch and mum used to have a permanent order there. And I'd fly home from school and up and pick up the pies, but oh I've never tasted pies like them, (laughs) they were beautiful. Then on from there was Mrs, it was my aunty actually, aunt and uncle lived up there; her name originally was Miss Whittem and she was the local chemist. And she married mum's brother, Jack Giles, and she had a shop there that was chemist shop and a little draper's shop joined there. And then they had their home at the back of those shops [phone rings, break in recording]. And then next to there was what was, in those days called, the old brown house. You might have heard about the old brown house?

**No I haven't.**

Yeah, well that was originally I believe, been an old hospital had been used by somebody, I don't know might have taken in a few people to look after. I don't have a picture of the brown house but there is a picture around I think in that, you know the pictures the History Village put out? And I think there's one in there. I can remember when that was there and it was a Mr and Mrs Wheeler lived there and it was old and it had old concrete floors. Dad was quite friendly with them and of course we used to go up there quite a bit, you know just have a cup of tea and things like that, but I can remember that. It wasn't there a long time because then it got knocked down and other buildings got built. And then beyond there, there was a building, it was a store; Roy Thompson is about the only one that I can ever remember, was a grocery store and out the back was a big shed and they had produce and bags of wheat and chaff and that sort of stuff but that building had been there for quite a long time because when you see photos of the railway station and you look back into Kalamunda there was the old hotel building and there was this one as well.

(10:45)

And that now is where, it's the same building, but been altered around is where the Thai on the Hill restaurant is so that was always there. Over the other side of the road, on the other corner there was also a building which was, when I knew it, was tearooms and that was where the bus stopped, that was the bus terminus, and of course that was always a handy place for people to stop. And then further on was the old hotel building and I think the new hotel building must have been there as well but, as I said it had originally just been the old thing. And then beyond that was the post office; that was pretty much, oh yeah on the other side of the road, where the library is now, there used to be Slatyer's, had a real estate office there, right on the corner just by where the crossing is and down towards just where the actual library building is, was the little shop, it was originally a little office and the Miss Synnet's also had a little real estate office there and they moved out of there and that became a little fruit shop and that was called the Fruit Bowl. That was right at the top of Haynes Street. So they all went and that's when the library got all built in there and that railway land was all reclaimed because that was after the railway line was lifted. And there was also another building, which if you go poking around you can find bits, right opposite where the Methodist church was, was a service station and Gil Mann, Gilbert Mann, he had a service station there on that corner. And I know one day we were just walking through that bit of land there and there are marks that indicate there were petrol bowser tanks or something there. They're things that have just completely disappeared and of course then there was the Methodist church of course because that went up in 1918 I think that was opened so that was on that corner of Mead Street. Going down Mead Street on the next corner down which was the corner of Central Road and Mead Street it was a butcher shop then and that's where Mr Nestor had his second butcher shop because his first one which was down in Haynes Street, that was opposite Mrs Finlay's little shop. There was a butcher shop and tearooms and that was called Braeside. And there's a little cut in road through from Central Road to Barber Street and that's called Nestor Brae, that little lane and that's after Mr Nestor and Braeside, that's how that name. It's very interesting the names in Kalamunda because just about all the names around the town centre are all after people that were identities and people who were around the town. I did a thing once, writing down all the names and sort of trying to trace the history, I don't know where that got to (laughs) tracing the history but most of them you can identify them as people who were pretty influential in the time.

(15:03)

So where have we gone? Oh and we go down and around and it was always in that square, the centre, and then down on the next corner, which was the corner of Canning Road and Mead Street was Portwine's Bakery. So they had their bakery there and a little shop, and at the back of the bakery was stables because they still delivered the bread with a horse and cart. And that went on for quite a few years, I can remember, I suppose I think I probably could have been ten (10) or something like that and they were still delivering the bread with a horse and cart. Jimmy Portwine was into racehorses, so he had a couple of racehorses that stayed in the stables at the back as well. Yes so that brought us back to our little shop on the corner there as well. So that's the town as I remember it. The town sort of ended at about where the [primary] school is, anything beyond the school was bush all the way down; there was a few houses at the end of Heath Road. Heath Road was fairly major but those like Snowball Road and Temby Avenue; Temby Avenue was just a cow track. There was a dairy at the corner where Stirk Park is now, that was a dairy and everyday they used to walk the cows from the dairy block through, at the back of the school and down Temby Avenue, right down to a block at the end of Heath Road where they used to graze the cows down there. And then at night time they used to bring them back again and they used to milk them down there. Stirk Cottage as it is now, in those days was used as the dairy and that's where they stored the milk and they had a room there, big thick stone walls. Whether they had some sort of refrigeration or what but that's where they used to take the cows and milk them and store the milk in what was Stirk Cottage. And of course later on, after they moved the dairy and all that went, Stirk Cottage sat there for a long time with nothing happening to it and then people decided to restore it back to its glory as it was in those days but it did go through a time when it was a dairy and that's where they stored the milk.

The town centre, where all the shops and that were, and just beyond [its] perimeter was mainly bush just over the railway line and down by the school and we had some pretty nasty bushfires in those days too because the bush was so close to town. We didn't have fire brigades or anything like that so if ever there was a fire around and the smoke was evident all the men that were available used to grab hessian bags and things like that; and that's what they used to take off with, their bags and fight the fires (laughs).

**That's a bit scary.**

It is a bit scary (laughs) but there wasn't much water or anything around in those days and that's the way it went.

**So what did you and your family do in your spare time when you were growing up?**

I wrote something about that (looking through papers). Spare time is something I (laughs) don't remember very much about. My mother and father worked long and late and I don't ever remember much about social things that they were involved with. I attended Sunday School at the Methodist Church from about the age of three (3), the beginning of a lifelong association and memories with that church which was the Methodist Church which has now become the Uniting Church. Something I do remember doing with my brother is spending a lot of time gluing ration coupons (laughs) onto sheets of paper because it was in the War years and things like tea, butter, sugar were all rationed.

(20:10)

And everybody had to have ration books and we weren't allowed to sell anything without people having their required amount of coupons and of course as a



shopkeeper, dad couldn't buy things unless he had the required amount of coupons. So one sheet of coupons was one box of butter and so many sheets of tea coupons got a tea chest of tea. So it wasn't only just the people had to come and have the coupons cut off their ration books, we had to do the same. And you can understand it was something that was ongoing because every week you needed to buy a box of butter, so every week. And that seemed (laughs) to be our job and I sort of thought, oh all I can remember is we used to sit in the lounge room with little glue pots (laughs) and little glue brushes. When my older brother was a teenager he joined the Kalamunda Football Club in the Hills Association and dad took a great interest in him, in his sport and of course as a family we would attend the football games on a Sunday afternoon. So the league comprised of Mundaring, Sawyers Valley, Chidlow, Mount Helena, Parkerville and of course Kalamunda. So that was our Sunday afternoons through the winter. I know sometimes in very hot weather it was a real treat that they used to take us down to the river at Como and we used to go; that was where we'd go and have our swims. We had a few holidays by the ocean and we laugh about it now but we went to Waterman's Bay because that's a suburb (laughs) now and people wouldn't think about going there for their holidays but we went there and had some really lovely holidays and stayed in these little cottages right on the beachfront.

A bit older I joined the tennis club and I played tennis. I had a pushbike and used to ride around. When I was about twelve (12) I joined the Girl Guides and then a bit later on I became a Cub leader and I was in Cubs as Assistant Cub Leader and a Cub Leader for about four (4) or five (5) years. Then I did that until just after we were married so I didn't carry on as a Cub leader but I joined the parent's committee and I was on that for about twenty (20) (laughs) years. Another thing, I used to love to go out in the bush and it was where I developed a real passion for wildflowers and I still have that passion for wildflowers, particularly orchids. Just down beyond the school and from there right out to the ridge and down was just a mass of orchids. Sadly people used to pick them and I've seen people come back with bunches this big [indicates size] of Spider Orchids. You just wouldn't believe that there was so many and of course that's what's destroyed them all; they get pulled out and of course people build houses and development and things like that but that was just the choicest piece of land down there. Last week I got a telephone call from a boy who used to live next door to us, it was Graham Farrell, from the corner down here and I don't suppose I would have spoken to him for sixty (60) years. He now lives in Queensland and he rang me up, he was trying to track down somebody that used to work for them because he is working on some history of his father. And he said 'oh you might not remember me' and I said 'oh I remember you alright' and then we got talking and he said 'do you remember we used to go out for a walk in the bush and looking for all those orchids' and I said 'yes' (laughs). So it was just interesting, and he was telling me how he pressed the flowers and he said he's got them in a book and he said 'you'd only think that they'd only been picked last week that they're so well restored and he rhymed off all the orchids, the spider orchid, the bird orchid, the enamel orchid, the donkey orchids. And it all came back to me and I said to him 'gee I've still got that passion'. I mean we go out sometimes, Perenjori is a great place where we like to go, so I still go out looking for bush orchids.

### **Can you describe your schooling please?**

Well I went to Kalamunda Primary School which is, well it's where it still is down Heath Road and I went there until grade seven (7), until sixth grade and then we went to high school and because there was no high school in Kalamunda I went to Perth Girls [School]. Travelled on the bus everyday from 7:30am, used to catch the 7:30 bus and most days got home just before five o'clock at night.

### **It's a long day.**

So it made a long day, yeah it really did make a long day; but very proudly went down there for three (3) years and there was only one day in three (3) years that I missed school and that wasn't through illness it was because that was the day my dad came back (laughs) from Scotland after having been away for six (6) months. So I attended three (3) years at Perth Girls and I left when I did my junior certificate. So that was school.

### **So what was the school like? Was it just a one roomed school?**

Kalamunda was, I'd say my earliest memories would be a four (4) roomed school, the two (2) rooms that are now at the History Village was where the Headmaster was and they're exactly as the setup is there now. And there were two (2) pavilion rooms, like separate rooms but that would have been all the rooms that there were. I think, as far as I can remember, that was all there ever was all the time I was there pretty much because the teachers sometimes used to take two (2) or three (3) classes you see and you'd have the infants and first grade, and two's and three's they were together. I don't ever remember any other rooms while I was there and of course the high school in Perth was well relatively modern and had all the facilities, oh I just loved that school (laughs). Domestic Science and all those homely learnings, you know, we did laundry and dressmaking and cooking; it was a really lovely school. That was situated on Wellington Street which is now the Perth Traffic Branch at the corner of Plain Street and Wellington Street.

### **So did many kids go down to Perth, to high school?**

Oh yeah quite a few, there used to be; we didn't have any special buses we used to catch the regular buses. Some people lived in Lesmurdie, some people lived in Forrestfield, some came from Kalamunda so we all were often on different bus routes but collectively from this area there might have been twenty (20) or so. And of course the boys used to go to Perth Boys and that was in James Street in the City. The Girls either went to Perth Girls or to Girdlestone which was next to Perth Boys, it depended on what course you were taking. Girdlestone was a commercial, for anyone doing commercial activities, they went in there; whereas Perth was the more professional. Well they called it a general and professional.

(30:06)

Professional was, they learnt languages and I didn't do that (laughs) and they did trigonometry (laughs) and I didn't do those things, I just did maths A.

### **I've got a question, did you travel to Perth and how often, so other than going to school in Perth did you travel to Perth very often?**

Not a lot, but when we were quite young it used to be a holiday treat, so it was obviously when I was going to school, that mum used to take us down on the train. And take David because Don hadn't come along in those days and used to take the two (2) of us down and oh we loved it on the zig zag on the train. So we used to be up there at about half past seven (7:30) in the morning onto the train, down to the city. I never ever remember ever coming home on the train because it was quite late and I know if we got off early in the morning we'd come home on the bus. So that was a holiday treat, it was obviously something we liked doing because I can remember we did it quite a few times; but apart from [that] we didn't go to the city a lot. A bit later on, as we got older, dad would get a car that was decent to get around

(laughs) in, I mean apart, going to school was probably the most I ever went to the city.

**And was there any organised entertainment in Kalamunda when you were growing up?**

Yes we had some entertainment, pictures was the main thing and that was up in the Agricultural Hall. That used to be on a Friday night and then they, sometimes it was on a Saturday night and sometimes it was on a Friday night. As a youngster that was about the only ever entertainment that I could remember. When I was a teenager, about seventeen (17) I suppose, there were dances and they used to often have a dance. They'd have the dance to the other night to the pictures, so it was either on the Saturday night or the Friday night and they'd be held I suppose about once a month. Different organisations used to do them to raise funds, that was like ballroom dancing and I used to go along with a girlfriend and we had a ball (laughs). Then later they had square dancing up here so, that lasted for quite a few years and that used to be on every week, I remember. Then for about, it wasn't a long time, but there was an open air picture garden and that was in Heath Road, right opposite where the [Uniting] church is now; on the other side of the road and there's a natural slope there. So that was good for an open air picture garden and we used to go and sit in the deck chairs and things; I would say that was in about the late 50s but it only lasted four (4) or five (5) years at the most and then it was sold and houses were built there. That was about, oh entertainment as such, then when I was about fourteen (14) the church had started a youth club and that was our sole, after that it was every week to the club and that sort of consumed the rest of my life (laughs) virtually; because we had a terrific bunch of teenagers and we all used to go along there, enjoyed each other's company and they started a tennis club and we played tennis down in the tennis courts down there on the corner. They started a, the Methodist church had a league where we joined and every weekend we used to be playing against other suburban, there was Como and Inglewood and Scarborough.

(35:12)

Different churches had different teams and we had an A grade and a B grade team that we used to participate and one year we won (laughs).

**Oh fantastic.**

So there was great excitement, but that's our entertainment. I think that's probably pretty much what we did in our spare time (laughs), for our entertainment.

**So what did you do after leaving school? Going back to schooling.**

Work?

**Yeah work-wise.**

I eventually, I stopped school and just sort of hung around for a while. I didn't really, because the shop was there you see, and I didn't really want to work in the shop, I wanted to do something else but I was given no encouragement to do anything else. I think, well I believe now that that's what we were expected to do, that when we were finished at school we were expected to be a part of the shop. I can remember I went for a couple of job interviews in the city, I wanted to do office work but of course I had no experience. I suppose I tried for a clerk or something like that, but anyhow I never did any good. So gradually to fill in my time I used to nose, hang around in the shop a bit and do a bit until I started spending most of my days there

and then dad said 'well, do you want to work in the shop? And if you we'll pay you'. And that was a long time ago (laughs) I worked for forty three (43) years in the shop, and I still do; forty three (43) years that I got paid for (laughs). What I do now is just voluntary and I do it to help, see I get messages like I just got on the phone (laughs).

**So in the shop you were serving people?**

Yes because shops were different in those days to what they are now, this could really take me off (laughs) if I start talking about the shop. Do you want to do that or do you want to finish?

**We could keep on going for a little bit.**

Well the history of the shop is another thing.

**Is separate.**

I'll do that afterwards.

**Ok. So I'll keep on with my questions then. When and where did you meet your husband? And what is his name?**

Well my husband's James, Jim, Harwood and we met at; Jim was a Scout and I was a Guide so we met in joint activities there and we both went to the church youth club and were involved with church activities and that's virtually where we met. Jim didn't always live in Kalamunda, he came to Kalamunda I think when he was about twelve (12) I think. We met, I would say he was about fourteen (14) when we met. We married; well I was fourteen (14) when I met him and I was twenty one (21) when I got married.

**And just briefly can you describe your family.**

My own family?

**Yes, your own family.**

Well I have two (2) sons, Bruce is the oldest and Mark. Bruce now manages the IGA [Independent Grocers Association] shop which is still our business, but prior to that he studied. As we encouraged our boys when they left school and said 'that the shop will always be there but we want you to do something else, go out in the world and do something else'. Bruce studied and got his Diploma in Photography and is actually a professional photographer and Mark did an apprenticeship at the Kalamunda Bakery and he graduated as a pastry cook. Neither of them are doing what they studied but we didn't mind that, we wanted them to get out and learn to do something else; not just be like I was, expected to leave school and go into the family business we encouraged them to do something else. So that's them. Mark is now separated from his wife but we have one granddaughter; and Bruce and Margaret don't have any family. So we've only got one granddaughter.

(40:25)

**Well the next two (2) questions really I think you've covered. That was, how has the Kalamunda town centre changed and some of the businesses. Actually we can talk about that still because,**

I would like to give you some history of our business, if you'd like to hear that.

### **That would be great.**

Because this is something that I'm quite passionate about (laughs). As I'd said earlier dad actually served an apprenticeship with a butcher and that started in 1926. Then in about 1929, 1930 when the Depression started to bite Mr Nestor could not keep all his butchers on and dad being, he married in 1931, so it would have been about the time he was married. And the butcher said that he couldn't keep him on because he had someone else working for him who had four (4) or five (5) kids and he felt that he needed to give the work to him. So he suggested to dad that he, because dad had gone out, he used to drive the horse and cart with the butcher, with the meat and he'd go out Pickering Brook, Karragullen, all around that area. He used to leave very early in the morning about four (4) o'clock in the morning and sometimes he didn't get home till ten (10) o'clock at night, out all day in the horse and cart. He'd say that on the very hot days he used to sit out under a tree and he'd take the horse out of the cart and put him in the shade and they'd both rest for a little while (laughs) and then they'd get going again. So that's how he started, but when he lost his job the butcher, Mr Nestor, said to him 'look you get on very well with all your customers, why don't you try and develop a little business of your own?' And he said like selling smallgoods like bacon and sausages and kippers, you know those sort of things. And dad thought oh well anything was worth a try. So he went round the people, first of all he got himself a little van, a little old van which he had converted and he used to put ice in the back because it wasn't refrigerated; he used to buy ice. And he set off around these customers that he used to call on with the meat and people were buying bacon and sausages and kippers and things and he started to build up quite a little business. And then people used to say to him 'if you're coming out here next week with these things, do you think you could get a couple of pounds of sugar and a pound of tea or something like that'. So there was a little shop, a Mr Jenner ran and it was down in Canning Road, just down near where Chelsea Decor is a little grocery shop there. So mum went down there and she said to Mr Jenner that people were wanting to buy these things and could she get them from him? And he gave them to her a couple of pennies cheaper than what was the price to give them the opportunity of making something. So that's how it started and then things, people wanted more and more and you know getting so much that mum was always sort of thinking well we could do better than what we're doing. So they went to D & J Fowlers in the city, they were grocery wholesalers, approached them and wanted to know could they start buying some things off them. That was organised, so they started getting these things from the warehouse and they stored them in little cardboard boxes in a little sleep out up in the house, a little cottage, where they lived.

(45:02)

I've got some photos of all these things. And the little cottage where they lived in Canning Road and that's where they started; so people wanted, you know, tea and butter and sugar and things like that. So it grew, you see and grew because the people out in the bush had no means of getting things and it was easier for them to stay home if somebody was bringing it to them.

So then time when on, so that was like I said, they married in 1931 and after they were doing so well on their little side verandah they decided to buy a block of land across the road and that was where our first shop went there. That's where the carpark now is, so they built a home with the shop joined together and that was the first shop. So he was delivering and so it went on and on (laughs). And that shop was enlarged about three (3) or four (4) times and then that just got so small they moved over to the other side of the road. And that's been added onto and altered and whatnot about five (5) times I think, it needs to be done again. Well in a nutshell

that's virtually how they started. We were the first shop in Kalamunda that had refrigeration and had Peter's icecream which we sold; we were the first shop to have Peter's icecream. Prior to that I can remember dad used to make his own icecream and he had a barrel churn about the size of a four (4) gallon drum, it was a wooden barrel and he used to mix up condensed milk and something. And I know the handle, you used to have to turn the handle for hours because I can remember doing my turn (laughs) at turning the handle but oh it was the most beautiful icecream, beautiful homemade icecream. So that was prior to the Peter's icecream which came in, so we had homemade icecream and iceblocks. He used to make them, he used to buy cordial sort of stuff and they'd mix up water iceblocks and he used to make those and you'd turn them out, then wrap them up in greaseproof paper. There was a special little compartment in the fridge where they were stored; you know these would take the place of everything that's bought these days.

Just about everything in the shop, apart from custard powder and cornflour and self raising flour, we packed ourselves; that was currents and sultanas and dates, and you name it, sago. Rice, well you couldn't buy rice during the War, that was rationed, rice. I lie in bed awake of a night time (laughs) thinking about all the things. And not only did we do up all these food things, down in the shed, down in the backyard we used to have to do up all the poultry food like wheat and pollard and bran and mash and chick food; all those things. Things were just so different to how they are now, I mean everything, you go into a shop now and everything's packaged and there's thousands of lines. Whereas in those days your whole existence was different, you lived off the basics and not all this prepared stuff that you get these days. And biscuits, they all came in bulk and we had them in tins and they were about a foot squared sort of thing, oh you used to get tremendous variety of bulk biscuits. We had a few packets like I think Granitas might have come in a packet and Milk Arrowroot but just about everything else all came, but you know gradually as time went on they started putting things into packets until the time came that there was just no more bulk things. Everything was packaged, cheese, all those sort of things; nothing was like it is now.

(50:06)

Cheese used to come in blocks about a foot high and a foot in diameter round and they were waxed; they had waxed skins and you'd peel the skin off. And we used to have, dad had a fine wire with two (2) pegs on the end of it and that's what we used to cut the cheese into slices about this big [gestures the size] and then you'd sell a little cut of cheese and somebody would come in and they'd want a piece of cheese; so you'd cut off their little piece of cheese weight it and gave it to them. There was no cash registers, no adding machines you just learned to be very good at mental arithmetic because everything, people would come in and buy things and you'd write down the price of it and when you get to the end you just had to add it up. And you'd hand it to them so that they could go home and check it. I don't think I ever had too many people come back and tell me that I hadn't added it up right. You just you had to, that's how you did things. And you had a drawer with the money in it.

Rice was an interesting thing, during the War rice was rationed and people used to have to have a doctor's certificate if they, I mean to me it seemed so stupid because now nobody has to have rice, but in those days they said they did. And they'd get a doctor's certificate and they had to have so many pounds of rice and it was rationed at one pound a month that was the ration. So when we'd get a quantity of doctor's certificates we had enough doctor's certificates to get a big bag of rice, so dad would do up their rice. And we loved rice in our place but we didn't have a doctor's certificate (laughs); but anyhow they would get their pound of rice, not one grain more and not one grain less and when we'd get to the end there might be about a

tablespoon of rice left over and that was enough for mum to make us rice custard (laughs) and we loved rice custard, I think it was dad's favourite food.

We had a few interesting things, because there was no such things, as I said it was wartime; sailors used to come to Kalamunda off the boats and they used to come here for rest and relaxation and when the boats were in port somebody up here used to organise a crowd of the sailors would come to Kalamunda. And they'd billet them around various homes and I know we had two (2) sailors that always, they were off the *London*, and whenever the *London* was in they always came and stayed with us. And of course the War boats they got all around the world and went to America and everything 'cause they could get things that we couldn't get. One year they got a quantity of firecrackers, it was quite a big box of them. I can remember we were threatened with hell and damnation if we told anybody we had these (laughs). We had these firecrackers you see; what dad was planning on doing was on Guy Fawkes night, the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, inviting everybody in the town to come to our place. And we built a great big bonfire out in the backyard and of course he produced these firecrackers. Well it was the talk of the town. Mum was terrified that we were going to go to jail (laughs) I think because you weren't supposed to have anything like that. So that was something we got from the sailors and another thing they brought us once was a box of chewing gum.

**Oh ok.**

Because there was no such thing, chewing gum wasn't around because of the War and they were sticks, you know the long sticks, well it came in with this big box of it and they brought it in. And of course dad used to, he didn't sell it or anything, we used to give it to friends and he gave it to us to give to our friends. It had been given to us by the sailors and it was really something to get. Another thing I remember was they came in with nylon stockings and I wasn't into stockings but I remember mum and her sister and friends were that excited the sailors had brought them some nylon stockings because prior to that they just wore those thick old lisle things (laughs) but it was really something to get some nylon stockings.

(55:19)

So when we were in the old shop there was no such things as frozen foods or anything like that and we'd moved across the road to the shop on the site we now have; and I can remember one day somebody came round and the very first line of frozen food that we got was frozen peas. They used to come in a big bag and we'd do them up in pound packets, so that was the beginning of the frozen food era. And after that, that was pretty closely followed by sausage rolls and little pies; they came in after the frozen peas. Chickens at that time, you only ever had a chicken at Christmas time, it's not like every week you do and you go and buy them now. Chickens were a thing you got at Christmas time and if you were very rich, a turkey (laughs) but chicken was Christmas food. And South African fillets, you know the smoked Cod, you used to get that in once a year at Easter, so that was Easter food. As I said this is where the difference to how it is now, I mean you go into a supermarket and it's absolutely loaded with everything. I was just trying to think of anything else special. So that's how it originated anyhow.

**That's great. I had a couple of questions, I didn't want to stop you when you were talking. Why did people need a doctor's certificate to get rice?**

Don't know, I've got no idea.

**That's very interesting.**

Now it seems so stupid, perhaps it was because they might have thought they weren't getting enough nourishment or something like that [clocks strikes] but we used to think it was a bit funny because I can remember some of the people that used to come in with these certificates and we'd think well what's the matter with them? (laughs) Why do they need rice? I've got no idea, because now nobody has to have rice as a special thing. I've often thought about that but I think it might have been perhaps if they thought they might have been something that supplied them with a bit more nourishment or something, I don't know.

**Very interesting. So with the Jenner's having a shop and then your dad starting up his business was there much, was there a lot of people to have two (2) grocery shops?**

Well there must have been. Mr Jenner, perhaps our shop must have taken over because I don't remember Mr Jenner's shop being there for all that long. No not as a grocery shop; that little shop was down there at the bus stop for quite a while and then it was just sort of closed up and I think somebody might have had it as a little, tried it as a little drapery sort of thing once; but I don't remember it being there very long. It was interesting and we've still got over there, the ledger from when the business started and we'd say to dad 'gee you had a good week the first week, you took six (6) [shillings] and five (5) [pence]'. Six (6) shillings, it's hard to remember, it's not sixty five (65) cents but it was six (6) and five (5) pence was about the whole sum total of his first week's takings. Things were only a penny and things like that.

**So that was pretty good money for the first week?**

Yes.

**Something else that would have changed in the Kalamunda town centre were the guesthouses.**

Yes.

**Lots of guesthouses around. Do you remember them?**

Yes. There was a few in Central Road. St Elmo was the one that I always remember because it had its name on its roof.

**Oh wow.**

St Elmo, there was a couple of guesthouses in Central Road. St Elmo was one and that would have been opposite where the KADS [Kalamunda Dramatic Society] Hall is now, that was the Anglican Church.

(1:00:19)

The churches were something that were always there in the early days. And it was just across from there, that's where the big town centre is, you know that shopping centre [Kalamunda Central] there. And then there was another one up on the corner of Mead Street and Central Road, I don't know what its name was. Actually in between those two (2) guesthouses was a couple of old shops, but they were always just old shops. I don't honestly really remember them ever being anything more than closed up old shops. So before my time they'd obviously been shops of some description but sat there; and people lived there with just the shop front there but they weren't ever used as shops. St Elmo, people used to come up on the train and they used to walk from the train, sort of diagonally through to St Elmo. There was another one out in Gooseberry Hill that was called Tavistock. Tavistock was a



big, oh these were lovely; Tavistock particularly was a lovely big old place. And then there was Boonooloo, another place down, oh not Boonooloo Road but there was a guest house called Boonooloo and it was over, off Cotherstone Road; down around that way, that was a guest house too. I mean you meet people now and they'll say 'oh my mother and father went up to Kalamunda for their honeymoon' (laughs) and they stayed in one of these, the guesthouses.

**So anything else that you can remember about how Kalamunda's changed?**

Well of course there was the train; that stopped in about 1949 I think. I remember that because that was the year Don was born, '49. They lifted the line about three (3) years later because we lost him one day when he was three (3) and we couldn't find him and he was found (laughs).

**Oh no.**

He was found up at the top of the town, up there sitting on a log watching the train engine apparently. So that's how I can always remember that. The train used to go through every day and there was a passenger train morning and night and there used to be a goods train that would go through during the night. That would come back and it would pick up timber and stuff when the mills were still working. There was Barton's Mill and Smailes' Mill and Canning Mills out there. I mean that's why the railway line was ever built in the first place was to service the timber mills. Of course once people started to get cars of their own and then there was a better bus service, like the train was slow going down the zig zag, but lovely the way the old train used to go (laughs) backwards and forwards around the hill. And something that I remember about the train was some of these customers that dad had out in the bush would ring up and they'd say 'oh do you think you could send us out butter or tea?' Just commodities like that and dad used to wrap them up into a little parcel and I remember he used to send me off up to the station of a night time there. And it was either five (5) cents or a shilling you had to pay and you'd give it to the guard and he'd have the customer's name on it and the coin, off the train would go and the people would meet the train out wherever it was going so that was how they got a lot of things.

(1:05:00)

But I can remember often doing that and he'd either go up there himself or sometimes if it was only a small parcel I was often shunted off up to meet the train and give it to the guard to take it out there.

**It must have been quite isolated out there.**

Oh they would have been, yeah because they had, well a lot of the people were mill people and worked around the mills and then of course the orchards and things were starting, people were starting up orchards and things then as well. It was a pretty hard life I think for some and there was no water or anything. I mean Kalamunda didn't get water until about 1956 I think was when we actually got the water on here; prior to that everything was just rainwater, rainwater tanks. We were the first house in Kalamunda that was connected to the water supply and the plumber, whoever did it, didn't put a pressure release valve. I don't understand what it is but something, pressure release valve wasn't connected properly and when it was switched on the whole hot water tank split open and we were flooded (laughs). So that was our first memory of being switched onto scheme water.

**Not a good memory.**

No there was this great big copper tank that was split right through, yeah I can remember that.

**So if the rainwater tanks ran out of water during the summer was there a central place that you could get water?**

There were, Kalamunda Transport carried water,

**Oh ok.**

They were carriers and they would bring water round. I don't remember us having to get water because we had quite a few tanks and I think that we probably were one of the lucky ones that had plenty of water. We also had, dad had had built in the backyard a big underground tank. I never ever sort of found out a lot about that but it was a big concreted over underground tank that I don't ever remember being used for a lot. I know there was a hand pump on it and we used to pump water but probably why it had been put in, in the first place was to store water perhaps we didn't need it. We used to reckon it was our air raid shelter (laughs). I don't think you'd be able to get into it very well (laughs).

**So where were Kalamunda Carriers based?**

Just out here on the corner of Brooks Street and [Heath Road] where the [Uniting] church is because that was bought from Kalamunda Transport and that was Gordon Farrell. He ran the first business and he just operated from there and his business got bigger and bigger and his sheds got bigger and bigger. So that was where the church bought their land from there it was Kalamunda Transport's.

**Who were some of the local identities of the area, either when you were growing up or as an adult?**

That's been about the most difficult question (laughs).

**Oh ok.**

As a kid I can't remember a lot about people, Tom Miller was the headmaster at the Primary School; I think everybody knew him, he was an identity well and truly. At an earlier age I can't remember a lot then. Later on I remember people like the Kostera's, old Mr Kostera and Jack Kostera, he was a member on the Darling Range Roads Board. And there was Ray Owen, he was actually a Member of Parliament but he was also had been on the Roads Board. There were people like Jack Watson, Westy De Young; my dad, Jimmy Crabb that is, they were involved in a lot of community things like the Progress Association. And the Progress Association got things like, they were working on the clinic, the health clinic and they were trying to get St John Ambulance and kindergarten.

(1:10:13)

The town had nothing, you see, they had to try and get all these things going. And I know all of those people were always great ones in; there were fundraising activities and there was gymkhanas and queen competitions and in those days those things raised relatively quite a lot of money. And they'd run them for the different organisations. And dad had been very involved with St John Ambulance and they worked very hard and he and two (2) or three (3) other chaps they used to go around knocking on all the doors in the houses in the town trying to get people to take out ambulance tickets. And I think they were only about two (2) pound because that gave them free ambulance transport for a year, but it was gradually all this

money that eventually got an ambulance in the town. First of all they bought an ambulance and then they, most of them were volunteers on driving the ambulance. Then kept on working at it until they got the ambulance rooms and eventually full time ambulance things; but that was something that they really did pioneer for a long time raising all the money to buy the ambulance and fund the things. But you know, they raised money for all those organisational things and of course the school was another thing like the P & C. But the Progress Association was sort of *the* thing and one of the very first things I think they built was bus shelters. The very first bus shelter that was built was down on Watsonia Road, (laughs) it's funny how you just remember little things; but that was the first bus shelter down on the corner of Watsonia Road and Kalamunda Road.

Now you're talking about identities, when we had the little shop Jimmy Mitchell used to come to Kalamunda and he later became Sir James Mitchell, the State Governor, and he used to come to Kalamunda for his holidays. And he would stay at the Kalamunda Hotel with his wife and he'd come down to our shop and buy chocolates and cigarettes (laughs). The cigarettes were for him and the chocolates were for his wife; but we got to know him quite well because he always, he used to come to Kalamunda and stay at the hotel for a few days and he used to always come down to our shop and we got to know him and as I said that's when he was the Governor. Another person that lived around in this area was Sir Paul Hasluck, he became the Governor General. And he lived around in Kalamunda at one stage too. I think it was only later on, after he'd become Sir Paul, that we realised that he had come from Kalamunda and he used to return incognito a bit I think that's when we learnt that he was a bit around in this area as well. That was, I just couldn't remember, perhaps you take things for granted or something, I don't know. That was something that I found about the most hard to think of.

**So you've mentioned a couple of community groups that you were involved in, were there any other groups that you or your family were involved in?**

Yes mainly Scouts were the thing we were involved with (looking at notes). The Scouts and the church would have been the thing that we as a family have been involved in. Earlier than that I belonged to the local tennis club, but mainly once the church started its tennis club I played with that.

(1:15:07)

Our boys have both been connected with, they were both Scout leaders; Bruce with Lesmurdie, Mark was with Kalamunda. Mainly, other than that it's just my connections with the church takes up all my time (laughs).

**Just thinking of other community groups like the CWA, was that around at all?**

There's always been a CWA but it wasn't anything I ever got involved with and my mum never had time for anything because she always worked. Mum and dad were both in the Progress Association and I know they worked. They used to have regular card evenings and things like that, you know raise money. CWA was around, what else would there be? No it was just like I said, the kindergarten, the clinic and the St John Ambulance, they were all organisations that were always running things to raise money. And then the sporting clubs, the tennis and the football, mainly tennis and football I think. It was only relatively in later years that there was hockey and other sporting clubs, but there always was a soccer club because dad belonged to the soccer club when he first came here. And he came from Scotland, from Motherwell, and of course Motherwell is a team that's in the Scottish league over there. And he followed that team every week, of all the years that he was here and his father every week sent him the little bit out of the paper with the football scores

and any little titbits about the football club. Every week without fail that used to come and when his father died one of his sisters took it on and every week she sent that. It amazed me almost until right up until in his nineties (90s) he was still getting the little bit. His sister used to write to him and cut out the little bits out of the paper, real Scot, canny. She'd cut the piece out of the paper and you know down the, they have a blank place where they call the stop press on the paper. And she used to write the letter (laughs) on the stop press of the paper (laughs) because that was cheaper than adding in another sheet of paper (laughs) because we used to pull his leg and say 'it's no doubt about you Scots, you know, why use another piece of paper when you can write your letter on the blank page on the piece of newspaper'. But that happened for years and then also during the War he sent food parcels home to his family because things were rationed even more over there than they were here. I remember he used to do up a food parcel and oh there was never a square inch that he didn't put something. It was packed so beautifully, of course tobacco and cigarettes and things like that were something you weren't allowed to send but his father smoked a pipe and dad used to send a plug of tobacco in a jelly packet. And that went on for years and then he always put in a couple of jelly packets with this plug of tobacco in it. And when the letter used to come back and say oh the parcel arrived, thanks very much for the parcel and particularly the jellies (laughs). I think mum was always scared that one day, she did everything right (laughs) and she was always scared that would go to jail or something if they caught dad sending plugs of tobacco. And even after the War when things I think over there were still very rationed he was still sending parcels.

(1:20:03)

I can't always remember what he sent but I know he sent them and I can always remember him, he was a beautiful packer, dad and he packed it up beautifully with brown paper and tied it up with string. It was before we had Durex tape (laughs) and things like that.

**Last question on my sheet. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

Its home, it's where I've always lived. It's different to suburbs, it has a village community feel; to me whether it's because we live here and you know all the parts of it. Other suburbs don't seem to have that, perhaps it's because (laughs) we don't know it but to me it's different than other areas. It always, whilst it's got modern shops and buildings and homes now, it's still maintained the village atmosphere. And as I said I thought about this question and I thought well to me its home, that's the thing and I suppose that's what I connected with.

**Excellent. Have you got anything else you wanted to add?**

I think just about most of that was covered in this manuscript I did. It was interesting, I thought I'd lost this because I had it on the computer and last year our computer crashed. And when we got it rebuilt and they put in new programs I had this on there but it wouldn't open. Oh and I was so upset and last night I was going through a box looking for some photos and I was absolutely delighted when I found the hard copy of this which was good.

[Referring to notes]

Mum's brother Jack, he delivered milk around the houses of a night time in his horse and cart. It was before we had bottled milk and you used to put your billy and your money out at the gate and they'd tip whatever amount of milk you wanted. We didn't have to put ours out on the front verandah because he was our uncle and he came into the house (laughs). He just used to leave ours on the kitchen table (laughs).

The bread was delivered by horse and cart, the milk was delivered by horse and cart. Dad had progressed from the horse and cart onto a little van.

**So with the milk deliveries, was that from the local dairy?**

Yes he had his own cows. He had a Jersey herd out in Walliston and he used to do his own milk and then of course there was the dairy down at Stirk Park and I think some of that milk he used to use. I don't think milk was pasteurised in those days, originally when we first got it because oh I remember we used to get this thick clotted cream on the top. I think it was before all the things like that came in.

I remember the plane crash. There was a plane crash in Gooseberry Hill, that was just towards the end of the War and it was an American plane and it had all American nurses and they were going home on leave. They left Guildford airport early in the morning and it was a foggy morning and there was no warning lights on the hill in those days, and it couldn't lift over the hill and it crashed down Lenori Road down there into a property where Bartlett's lived. It came into a granite outcrop, you know how there's that thing. And there just wasn't a hope, everybody on the plane was lost.

(1:25:00)

Mum's brother, another one of her brothers, was working at Guildford airport at the time and they got a phone call to say the plane had crashed on Bartlett's property in Gooseberry Hill and they rang us up, he rang dad up to find out how would he get to Bartlett's place in Gooseberry Hill because a plane had crashed down there. So of course we all piled into the car and had to go and have a look, and took us down Lenori Road we never got out of the car or anything, but we would have been there before fire brigades, police or anything; pretty soon after it had happened; because he rang and we went out straight away to have a look. And the plane was still burning you could see that, as I said they were American nurses. So that was something that put Kalamunda on the map and they erected a memorial. The Americans erected a memorial but I don't think it's there now. It's the, there used to be a big tower light with flashing lights on it that used to be there of a night time bit I don't believe it's there now. And after that they put a few other tower lights across showing where the edge of the hill was, but that particular one that was erected as a memorial to that plane crash I don't think is there now. For what reason they moved it I don't know.

Now I've got some photos.

**I'll just stop this recording.**

Interview ends 1 hour 26 minutes 56 seconds



Car crash, mid 1930s



Crabb's cottage, where James and Ada Crabb lived 1931-1934. Photo taken at a much later time.





Crabb's general store, Canning Road



Crabb's general store staff, 1952. From left to right: Patty Prince, Ada Crabb, May Burn, Pat Hallahan, Albert Green. Front Don Crabb.

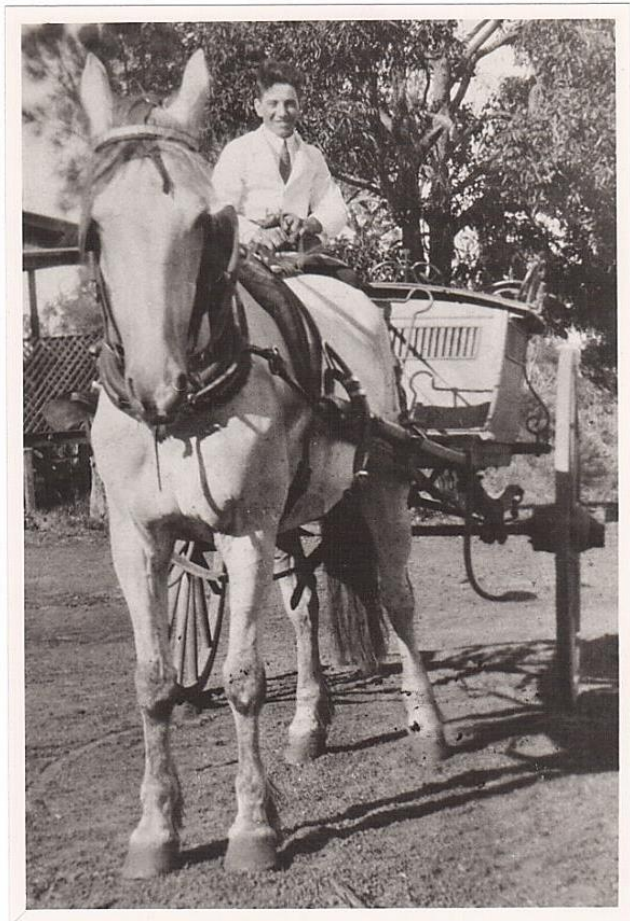


Delivery van, about 1936.



Crabb's Foodmaster supermarket, 1985.

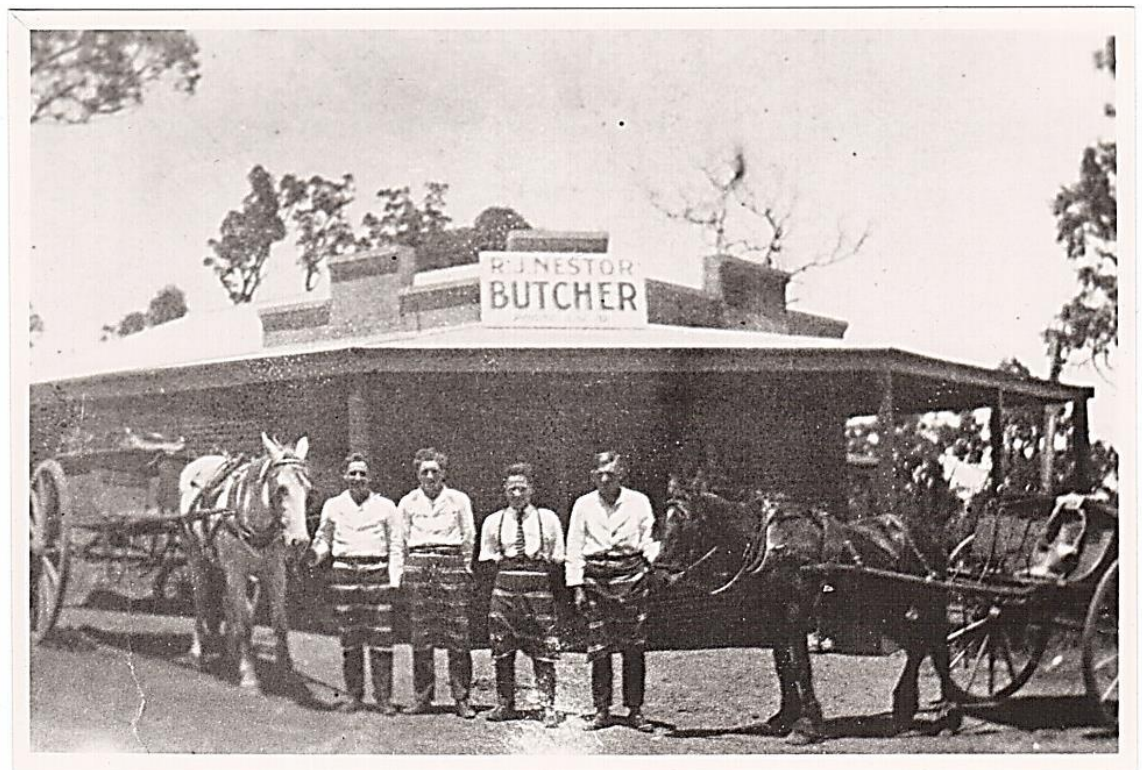




Jim Crabb, 1930.



Ada and Jim Crabb



Nestor's butcher staff, 1929.



Crabb's shop, view from Heath Road



**Oral History interview**

**Aneeta and Michael Huntley**

**Interview date: 28 February 2012**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 28 February 2012, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Aneeta and Michael Huntley for my Curtin University thesis project, the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**I'll start with you, Aneeta. Your name and birth date, please.**

AH: Aneeta Huntley, maiden name was Sue 23<sup>rd</sup> of the third (March) 1962.

**And you.**

MH: Mick Huntley. My birthday is the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the ninth (September) '59 – 1959, and virtually just lived in Kalamunda all my life. So, yeah, how far do you – just carry on?

**Yes, just carry on, just about your family.**

MH: Do you want Aneeta to start first?

**No, you can keep going and I'll ask Aneeta.**

MH: Yeah, that's right. Yes, like I said, dad was the local paper man in Kalamunda and when Kalamunda. I think you've probably heard they had Crabb's. Crabb's was at the top of Heath Road there - I mean, Haynes Road - then you come down, you had Pikes the deli down there, down there on the bottom just over the road from Kalamunda Newsagent's. I think it was Blythe's – Blythe's Newsagency, back in those days. Mum grew up in the bottom of Heath Road here in Kalamunda, don't know the number but she grew there and she was a book, oh, an accountant or a book accountant for I think the butcher's next to Blythe's, which is Sebastians, she worked there just part-time. So then they met up, and dad lived in Forrestfield, he grew up in Forrestfield, down the bottom in Holmes Road and he used to ride his horse and catch brumbies through the hills up in Kalamunda. Actually, yeah, he did that for oh, probably about ten (10) years and then he went to CBC (Christian Brothers' College) in Perth, schooling, and then ended up virtually marrying mum and they've lived in the hills ever since (wind chimes in the background) Now our household is still in 37 Boonooloo Road, Kalamunda. They deceased two (2) years ago come this July. So virtually, like I said, dad was like a newsman for forty eight (48) years and there are paper clippings of him, and things like that, I can get you if you need them but they're still round the old house and that, and he was virtually did it 'til he was, I think, seventy two (72). He delivered papers to them then he retired so, yeah, like I was telling you before, he used to deliver – do two hundred (200) miles on a Sunday morning with the Sunday Times and Independent back then. But as in just what you're asking about is Kalamunda, the memories of Kalamunda was you could walk down the main street and everybody knew each other. Now I mean, it's grown, as places do, I mean it's really expanded. Gooseberry Hill's got huge. Most the area round Kalamunda itself, central, probably hasn't changed but with the flats and all that, the units getting in; yeah, I mean there was a lot of old timber houses. I mean you very rarely see a wood fire these days. It's all usually gas fires and that. But back in those days, everyone worked out in the mills. Like I was saying, dad worked out when he did the paper round, Barton's Mill was pretty strong then, the timber. I mean you had just out here off Lesmurdie Road, Verticordia Road. Out there, you had, I forget what mill it was called, there was a wood mill there, which serviced all the timber and that for all the housing. Of course, it's gone now, it's all housing through there. The industrial area was never there, as you would've probably been told. Where the museum is, was the bus depot and the railway line used to come up through there, which mum and dad used to catch the train in and out of Perth. I don't know if dad did, did he Neet?

AH: Probably, I don't remember. I don't know.

MH: On our side, I mean, there's a lot more. Your family?

AH: Oh, she's got some questions she's gonna ask.

**That's all right. What were your parents' names, Mick, just for the record?**

MH: Joan Katherine Huntley. Her maiden name was Bridgewood; and Charles Peter Huntley.

**And your family, Aneeta.**

AH: My dad bought here, in 1948 after the War, in James Road. The house is still there today. They've lived here since 1948 and my mum worked in the city and my dad worked – they both worked in the city. My mum used to work at the local, the Kalamunda Hotel of nights so that they could get extra money, I suppose, to have a better life.

(5:02)

**Okay. I forgot to ask about siblings. Have you got any siblings?**

AH: I've got six (6) brothers and one (1) sister, so we were a big family.

**And your parents' names?**

AH: My dad's name is Jacky Wong Sue and my mother's name was Pamela Joy Sue.

**Okay, so were you both born in Kalamunda, or pretty much around this area?**

MH: Yep.

AH: Yes, St Anne's down the bottom of the hill.

MH: Was too, wasn't it?

AH: Born and bred, yeah. I'll just shut this door.

MH: Neeta's father and my father, Peter and Jack; the Kalamunda Club which was there where the bowling greens are now was tennis courts.

**Oh, really.**

MH: That was tennis courts down the bottom there and a big oak tree. There was a tennis club out there and it's always been a club. They're original, I think, they're built of brick or something like that and, yeah, that would be when they were probably twenty eight (28). I don't know it's a long time ago. I think their names are still up there with a lot of other people. Virtually back in those days, there was only, I think the Kalamunda Club was pretty big of course it wasn't as big as it is now. The old pub was always there as in where Kostera's was. I used to, when I was young, I remember the town centre pretty well because I used to sit out there, when they had the Daily News, and I used to walk around the shops; and I still remember when the village centre; you may remember when the village centre got-

AH: When it first came - - -

MH: Yeah, the village centre. That was huge. We'd never seen a big shopping centre like that before. I mean, it's pretty small now (laughs) but that was great. My sister was an apprentice, she did an apprenticeship, she's fifty eight (58) now. She did one of the first apprentices to go through Mr Tesline's up there, when you walk down, its top left hand side, Mona Lisa I think, yeah, Mona Lisa it was. She was a hairdresser there.

AH: Wasn't Barberry Square here first?

MH: No.

AH: That came later, did it?

MH: Yeah, Barberry Square came later, yeah.

**So what year did the village get built?**

MH: That would've been 1959, maybe 60s. I mean, probably late 60s well, I was delivering papers through there when I was about ten (10), eleven (11), I think, so it was just done and things like that; 'cos I used to walk from there up to Kostera's Service Station. Where they are now was never there.

AH: Kostera's used to be where the TAB is and the Cup Cake Shop.

**Oh, okay, on Haynes Street.**

MH: Yeah. What's that 'Little Things' is it, just as you go through where the TAB is now? And then that road there that goes, that actually goes up to Coles, that used to be a gravel driveway, and that split. Those group of shops through there were there, and there was a dress shop where the actual, Mrs Atherton I think it was. Mum used to get her dresses from there. She had a dress shop there where the bottle shop is now, little tiny shop, and then you kept going up the alley then there was an old set of toilets, there was outback toilets back of the – where the actual tattoo shop is. If you walk up there I think it's just directly out the back there and then Kostera's had all that land right through where that car park virtually is.

AH: Where-

MH: That block there. They had all that there.

AH: Not all of it 'cos on the corner there where the Asian restaurant is what's that called?

MH: Oh, I don't know what that street is.

**The Thai on the Hill?**

AH: No, no, the one down opposite the Commonwealth Bank there.

**Oh, okay, Hans.**

AH: Hans, yeah.

MH: Hans, yeah.

AH: That used to be the original R&I Bank.

MH: The R&I Bank was down further, wasn't it?

AH: No, it used to be the R&I and then opposite that was Underwood's where the Commonwealth Bank is now.

MH: Underwood's, yeah. Over that road from there was virtually where the Commonwealth Bank is, was Underwood's really wasn't it? Yeah, cos you had the R&I. Then another story is, mum's brother, Gerry and Dawn Bridgewood, they actually sold their house. They were, if you went straight up and where Coles is, where Mead Medical is, that side there, on the other side they actually had all that block there and there was an Ampol Garage up on the top left hand side. They sold to Coles, yeah. Uncle Gerry, that's there. Then they moved to Mt Lawley and no wonder why what they sold it for. But the alleyway, came through there, and he had a huge property, a good three quarters of an acre there of land, that whole corner with a little shop front and all that.

(10:05)

They owned all that property there, cos we used to half live there all the time like that, so, yeah, being mum's brother, Gerry Bridgewood. And they turned around and, like I said, moved on but they had that. And then past that on the corner, on the top corner where Kostera's is, on the left of that there was another service station. I think it was called Lush's. I think I can remember it was Lush's. It was an Ampol Service Station on that corner there. I think that's the only two (2) service stations you had, was the Ampol up the top there and then you had Kostera's down there. I can't think of any other service stations around but then, cos you come straight through the pub, the old pub. We used to, where the pub is now, there was, where they got the alfresco and all that was all just footpath. The columns are still there. If you walk past, and the columns are still there and dad used to drive through that footpath and deliver the paper so it wouldn't get pinched, so that's how long ago that was. And there the old pub there. Your friend was there, wasn't she Neet, who ran it? What's-his-name?

AH: Can't remember what her name was, Debbie.

MH: Oh, yeah, we all went to school with them. It was virtually local, it was pretty all local then. I mean, we all played footy up the Kalamunda footy Oval and it was always, but mainly, the history of the place-

AH: It was a young town then.

MH: Yeah, it was probably young. There was a lot of young blokes. Kalamunda High School was just starting to boom then. I mean, it was starting to go off (wind chimes in background). I went to Mazenod for two (2) years then I went to Mary's Mount, because that was one of the Catholic schools, and then went to. My brothers and sisters all went to Mary's Mount as well, well, Derek didn't, sorry. My sisters did and my other two (2) brothers went to De La Salle because they were older. De la Salle's is still going down in hill there. I'm just trying to think what else was kind of around the place.

**Tell me some of your memories of Kalamunda, Aneeta.**

AH: I just remember, well where Crabb's is now, where Stirk Medical used to be a little white house. It's always been white actually, there. There was a little white house on stilts, and probably where Barberry Square was, there used to be a dress shop, Freda Woods was the name. She used to have a little dress shop in

MH: Freda Woods (laughs)

AH: Oh Freda.

MH: Mum does.

AH: When they built Barberry Square, where Hawley's Shoe shop has always been there, as Hawleys, and opposite Hawley's where the video store is, that used to be a dress shop in there. Then where Auto 1 [is] it used to be Tom the Cheap. Was it Tom the Cheap?

MH: I think it was Foodland, wasn't it?

AH: Was it?

MH: Freecorns, was it? Is it something Freecorns was?

AH: We did have a Freecorns.

MH: There was a Freecorns in there which went to Foodland then went to, I think. Yeah, I don't know. I'm pretty sure it's Freecorns.

AH: It didn't last long because we had Crabb's there for so long, from memory.

MH: Well, Crabb's always been up, there was Underwood's then once Underwood's went on, I'm just trying to think Crabb's.

AH: I thought Crabb's has always been on the corner where they are. I think it's sign up the top says since about 1913 [1934] that building or something.

MH: Yeah, it is actually. It could be, because we went to Crabb's and you went down there and you had your medical place you go to (coughs), and then you go down there and then you'd turn right to go up Haynes Street and on the left there, there was a hardware shop. There was Pikey's. Remember Don Pike and Denise Pike?

AH: Mmm.

MH: They had their store, like, them and Underwood's were the two (2) general stores virtually and then over the road you had Blythe's.

AH: I thought up the top where Thai on the Hill is, was the old hardware.

MH: That was Walkers. No, down the bottom was always the hardware because I used to go down the bottom there and they used to put a basin on my head and cut my hair. That's why I'm probably bald now (laughs).

AH: Yeah, sure (laughs).

MH: But, no, it was true. There was a barbers underneath, there was a barbers over there, right where probably Chicken Treat is and then there was a hardware in there.



That was years and years ago, yeah. And then I think Walkers then moved up to the top, up where Thai on the Hill was and then Walkers became Mitre 10.

AH: Mitre 10, yeah. And then where the Chinese restaurant is, that used to be a pastry shop. An American guy came out, from memory, America and opened up a little pastry shop up here. That was really big for Kalamunda in those days, because we had our own pastry chef up here, like. He did some really nice pastries too.

**Okay.**

AH: The fish and chip shop's still there. That's been there since eons.

(15:02)

MH: Yeah. I think, correct me if I'm wrong but I think the only place that's original and is still serving under the same thing is the Kalamunda Bakery, 'cos Clarkies had that. I can remember that since day dot.

AH: Well, yeah.

MH: Clarkies the bakery, you know, on Mead – just over the road from Mead Street.

AH: It's not there now though.

MH: Yeah, there's still a bakery shop there.

AH: Oh, a tiny little one, yeah.

MH: Well, that was. That whole section there was Bob Clarke's. That was their pastry shop and that's been there since day dot, it has. And that corner there, that church where Kostera's is now, that was always a church up there. My sister and brother-in-law got married there, probably close on twenty (20) years ago.

AH: Who, Jill and Bob?

MH: Yeah, they got married in that church. Now Stuart Kostera lives in there now.

AH: My sister Glenda got married in there.

MH: Did she?

AH: Yeah.

MH: Okay.

AH: Her and Gary, 'cos her husband, her ex-husband was Gary Kennedy and they had the milk run here.

**Oh, okay.**

AH: That used to be in Heath Road where they-

MH: Got flats, units there now.

AH: Yeah, they've only just built units on it, on the left going up.

MH: Just before you get up to Brook Street, just on the left there. Well, as you can see right through, it was there. The best thing I remember about Kalamunda was, because we were young blokes, and there was a lot of young blokes here then, we used to have the; Neet's brother, Graham, and myself, we used to hang out a bit, 'cos we're the same age. And we used to go to Kalamunda skid kids down in the sand pits. It was behind where you go down here, go back up here to Boonooloo Road, turn right into Boonooloo Road and as Traylen Road hits up, up at the back there was a big sand pits and we used to, all us kids that used to hang there, there was about twenty (20) of us, on our push bikes every Saturday afternoon.

**Oh, okay.**

MH: If you got your chores done, you could go down there.

AH: That was like the BMX track of the day.

MH: Well, that's virtually what the kids do now, it's a BMX track. We'd all go down there for a couple of hours and race bikes and just have a bit of fun and things like that. A young bloke, who was older than us, his name was Tony Ellerby, he was riding. I think he nearly made the Olympics actually, he was that close. He was pretty good in Australia. He started it up, but actually it was dirt riding; not actually [BMX]. I think he done a lot of road but it was mainly dirt riding, so yeah, he got all the young kids so they wouldn't get up to mischief.

AH: Well, that was all orchard through, where the corner of Urch and McRae Road is, there was all orchard it used to have a little stream that ran all through there.

MH: What, Urch?

AH: As kids we used to, where Scats lives, Debbie.

MH: Oh, yeah, that's down the back of - that's not where I'm talking about.

AH: Where are you talking?

MH: I'm talking about Boonooloo Road, at the back of Boonooloo Road. You know Boonooloo Road, you know where Traylen Road comes up.

AH: Oh, yeah.

MH: Boonooloo Road. It's at the back, behind Mr Thomas's place used to be, then you had-

AH: It must've been a boy's thing.

MH: It was. No girls allowed.

**So what did you used to do Aneeta, if they were all BMXing?**

AH: As a kid, I guess, we always hung at the swimming pool because growing up, my folks had a house in Yanchep – a beach house at Yanchep – and my dad being a diver, we used to go out there quite a lot on weekends and do all the diving. We didn't get to spend a lot of weekends here but most of my childhood weekends I don't remember spending here, it was always at Yanchep. Then as I got a bit older into my teenage years, I used to just hang around 'cos close to where we are at the

end of the road used to be all orchards, all the way through. And so we used to just sort of go and hang in the orchard, cos the guy there, old bottle-oh Grizzadeli, Mr Grizzadeli, had an orchard and he was the local bottle-oh. He used to come around and pick up all your empty bottles.

MH: The King Brown's. You know what a King Brown is? You would've heard of that.

**Yes.**

AH: So, spent a lot of time at his orchard, you know, just helping him out and things. But other than that, all we did, oh, Whistlepipe Gully, we used to hang at Whistlepipe Gully a lot, catching gilgies, which there is nothing there now.

MH: There was virtually gilgies when the water was running. Used to go down, we used to do that because our block's back on was Brooks Street, Boonooloo Road. Mum and dad's block backed on to there where the skid. I think it's actually White Road, where White Road comes in now off Brooks Street. That's where we used to have, oh, there was beautiful white sand and there was water running all the way through there and just ponds anywhere, you would always find gilgies. Yeah, always just go down there. That's the biggest thing we used to do, none of this, what is it now? None of this (motions for using a computer game controller and phone).

AH: Yeah, I know. Well, I mean, as kids it was like go out, don't want to see you, so you were only allowed to come home at lunchtime to feed and then like out again and all you'd be doing was just riding your pushbikes and climbing trees.

MH: You didn't want to stay home, you had to do too much work (laughs).

AH: You were just always out, you just weren't allowed to anyway. Mum wanted to clean the house, it was like 'out'.

(20:18)

MH: The old town's changed a fair bit. I mean, when I think back and look at it, when you used to go Pokie's. I think the big new bigger store was where Bunnings was, was Woolworth's.

**Okay.**

MH: Yeah, that was Woolworth's.

AH: Yeah.

MH: I'm pretty sure it was, wasn't it?

AH: That's right, yeah.

MH: Woolworth's and then come the village centre, then came the village centre come the Last Drop Tavern, which I think is called The Best Drop.

AH: That was Stove's.

MH: Yeah, Stove's Butchers were there where that antique place I think is now, just next to [The Best Drop].

AH: Yeah.

MH: And besides that, Stove's, was the oldest-

AH: Hastings.

MH: Hastings. The oldest shop there was Hastings.

AH: Haberdashery store.

MH: Yeah.

AH: We all got our school uniforms from there.

MH: Hastings used to have. I think they probably still do all the uniforms and all that now. Are they still going?

AH: No, no.

MH: Oh, they've shut down have they?

AH: They closed. Well, they moved up to where the real estate is near the Blue Ox there. And they've closed.

MH: Right, that was virtually, they were there. That's where we got all our school clothes from and everything like that, Hastings was. And coming down the other end which was, yeah, virtually that corner. I don't remember much being on that corner in there but I can always remember that top of the corner of Kalamunda Road was it Canning Road and-

AH: Haynes Street.

MH: Haynes Street, yeah.

AH: Where the ANZ Bank is.

MH: No, no, up the top, further. Right at the top where Kostera's was, you know, over the road, go up where Thai on the Hill is, where that little place is.

AH: Near Dreams?

MH: Yeah, I don't know what was in there. There was never anything there for years. I can't remember much being there. It was always closed because you come around that little corner, and that was a little jewellery store I think, there. The town was small. There was virtually Haynes Street and that was it. Then you had Kostera's which was huge, then you had the pub and then virtually that was an alley. Where Coles is, that was a TAB. That was a TAB, T-A-B, down there which was. I think that was Mead Street that went through there actually. Yeah, that was Mead Street that comes through there. There was a TAB down there, over the road from the pub.

AH: Mead Street used to go all the way.

MH: Yeah, right through Mead Street. Well, where Mead Street comes up when you turn left into the back of Mead Street Medical, that used to go straight through.

**Okay.**

MH: That goes straight down to where the Commonwealth Bank is. That used to be there. That little arts theatre was always there. I always remember that little joint, kind of thing that was there. Then, like I said they've done a bit, but then you spread out. I mean, like I said, much of this is all, all through here is pretty old. I'm just trying to think. Are you actually just doing Kalamunda or just the Shire, like you said.

**Yes, mostly just Kalamunda but a bit of the Shire too.**

MH: Yeah. I'm trying to think. The cop shop was over the road, the old cop shop was over the road from the bakery, old Clarkies bakery and Mead Medical.

AH: We used to have, we did actually have KFC up here.

**Really!**

AH: Yeah.

MH: That's where the pool shop is.

AH: Where the pool shop is where Bangles used to be, opposite there.

MH: Yeah, that was huge, the old KFC.

AH: Never a drive-in, it was just a walk-in KFC store, and I don't know whatever happened there.

**So when did that come?**

AH: Wow, that would've been the 70s, mid 70s.

MH: Yeah, for sure KFC was there. The only takeaway place ever seen after that was Chicken Treat really. I mean that's up where the market. I mean, I don't know what they do, it's the Kalamunda Shire. I mean, everywhere else gets everything but -

AH: We don't seem to get a lot up here. The old RSL club had a Curry House in there for quite a while, and that was about the only time I think you see the RSL sort of alive, was when they put the food hall in.

MH: And before that RSL was there, there was an old house there which Janine Ellis, they used to live, because her dad used to be the local traffic cop. What's his name? Colin Ellis. The first time it come in it would've been when Wayne was seventeen (17). What's he, fifty seven (57), I suppose, so forty (40) years ago. It'd be forty (40), thirty (30) years ago. Seventeen (17), yeah, forty (40) years ago it would've been, that behind there where Colin Ellis used to live in the house at the back there with Janine and Sue his sister, because we went to school with 'em. We used to go and sit out on the back lawn there with his wife. I forget his wife's name but, yeah, that's where the patrol cars used to run through.

(25:06)

They had an orange one and a white one cos there was another guy and they weren't actually policemen then, they were actually just traffic cops. They could probably a bit like, I suppose, yeah, well they had authority to pull you over and do

what they do. I think the first guy (laughs) - I know this story. The first guy ever to get done for DD in Kalamunda was Norm Loy, for leaving the Kalamunda Club and Colin Ellis booked him. He says, 'don't do it again,' he give him twenty (20) warnings...just didn't care, just kept driving home drunk. Yeah, Norm Loy, he got...I think he got two (2) months (laughs). Yeah, and a hundred bucks (\$100) or something like that, or fifty bucks (\$50), which was big money back then. Old Norm, he lost his licence, when all that first thing came in. Virtually the Scout Hall where - I think where Toyota was, there was always a service station there, wasn't there?

AH: Yeah.

MH: There was a service sorry, the service station was there. It's kind of still built like a service station but it's been upgraded, and the Scout Hall, that's next to Toyota, that's been there, jeez, ever since; and the big old hall. The hall was there. The greatest day I reckon Kalamunda ever had was when they had the Oktoberfest up here. That was the first one. I think the first Oktoberfest they've ever held.

AH: First and last I think.

MH: Yeah. In Perth, it was virtually one of the, that's it, yeah, that's all right (phone ringing in background). You had the Scout Hall and then you just had houses through there, I think, old houses. Over the road you had the old hall and then that was always big - the Kalamunda Show was always huge and then you had all the little. What was it? All the little - I don't know, like pavilions down there and that. You know you had the old one next to the fence near the tennis courts at the school. You know, down where - on the hill as you go down. Yeah, that was all gravel and the oval was, which you've probably been told already, gravel. They used to have bike racing; I don't know why there was bike racing around there, and the oval was a lot smaller so if you take in. Probably about ten (10) metres of that was all gravel around the outside of the footy oval, and you just walked down. There were no steps there, you just walked down the gravel banks and all that sort of thing. I remember, 'cos we used to train and at the back where the cricket nets are over there now, the cricket nets were on a big drive where you drive down near the junior footy club. You drive down there and down the bottom there, there was all the cricket nets down there; it's like a big slope down. Where they park their cars behind the footy club, that used to be the basketball courts.

AH: Netball.

MH: No, they had basketball. Derek played, my brother played basketball there. Yeah, he was seventeen (17), eighteen (18); so Dicko's sixty two (62), so-

AH: It was girls' netball on Saturdays and the boys played football during the week.

MH: Yeah, that was like Lesmurdie. That's where it all first started up. There were four (4) courts, I think, and then they built another two (2) courts.

AH: They shifted the basketball out to Lesmurdie and left the netball behind the footy club.

MH: Then they built that. I've been a life member of the Kalamunda footy club for probably twenty (20) years, I'd say. The Kalamunda footy club moved - they were out at Kostera and then they had to move down to Hartfield Park because of some reasons with the juniors and that the oval couldn't handle all the people. So the seniors got pushed out of the Kalamunda; the senior footy club got pushed down to

Hartfield Park in Forrestfield and we were there until 1972? No, not 1972, '82. I think 1982 we came back, we weren't allowed to come back to Kostera, we had to come back to Ray Owen Oval, which they still are now, and that club's just getting bigger and bigger and bigger but they do everything off their own back.

MH: There was a demountable we had and I think it was the old basketball centre there, and we had no change rooms or anything like that; and they just put up these two (2) sheds. Yeah, there's a fair few photos of all that. That's on the sporting side, as much as I know. The cricket club's been always strong at Kalamunda, that's been pretty good, the sporting side. The Tennis Club, as you know it's up the top on Railway Road. That's always been strong; yeah, that's been good.

(30:11)

Netball, I always remember it being, it first started, like I said, at the back of Kostera's. I remember when I was a junior I think they built those new rooms there. You've always had the Kalamunda Cricket pitch, it's always been a mud pile, which you probably would've heard.

MH: Memories of school. Neet might fill you in on the memories of school. It was pretty basic really, wasn't it, the old school?

AH: Kalamunda High?

MH: Yeah.

AH: It wasn't too bad when they built that extra wing on for the library area. That sort of got better from there but the primary school was pretty basic. Opposite post office was where we had our kindergarten. That's where the main, I don't even know what's there now. Actually, when I came back years and years later, it was still a kindy there, opposite the Post Office.

MH: That's right up there. That was always there, you could always walk down there. I'm just trying to think. You had the old big Catholic Church, that's been there since day dot that has, up there on Railway Road.

### **Was the primary school a small school? Were there many kids there?**

AH: I think we might've had a couple of hundred. I wouldn't even know what they've even got there today. But, yeah, I'd say we probably had a couple of hundred. I think we had one of the first lot of Aboriginal kids that schooled up here with us, you know, cos they all used to live down here at the cemetery on Kalamunda Road. How they got into Kalamunda and didn't go to any of the other schools, I don't know, but, yeah, they all used to come up to Kalamunda School.

MH: Well you see, we had no high schools down there. You had primary schools, Maida Vale's been – oh, hang on, that's pretty new isn't it? I think old Newburn Road, High Wycombe was pretty old but I think high schools, you've never had any. Well, Forrestfield wasn't there, Lesmurdie was never there. All we had was Kalamunda and there was High Wycombe, Maida Vale, Forrestfield, Kalamunda. I mean you used to get [kids from] Maddington.

AH: They'd all come up here, wouldn't they.

MH: That used to cater for so many kids.

AH: Well, there couldn't have been too many primary schools down the bottom, because these kids all came up to.

MH: I think the only one I know was in Newburn Road. I mean, not that I went down there much because you never moved off the hill much. The biggest place, I mean you couldn't do your grocery shopping. We had six (6) kids in our family; there was three (3) boys, three (3) girls, and every Friday afternoon we used to get the old FJ and after school go down to Midland and turn around and - especially my sisters. I mean I was second youngest, and we used to go down there and sit with mum and go down there and do our shopping, at Midland. That was a big thing. That was pretty full on.

AH: Did you mum not shop at Crabb's?

MH: No. Well, she couldn't get what she wanted I suppose. I don't know. She used to go down to Midland, so, yeah.

AH: Probably an outing.

MH: Yeah, I'd say so, dragging all us kids around it would've been a great outing (laughs).

AH: My mum'd ring Crabb's up and put her order in and they'd come and deliver and they'd come into your back yard. As no-one locked their house, they'd come in through the house, put your groceries in the freezer and put it in the fridge, whatever, and just leave it there for you. Every Friday they used deliver so it was like 'yes' get home and find something, a packet of Tim Tams or something that mum had ordered for visitors and we'd steal them (laughs).

AH: What other questions have you got there that we haven't covered?

**I guess entertainment. Any organised entertainment? I know some of the older people talked about movies and stuff. Was there anything - - -?**

AH: Oh, yes, there some great bands up at the Kalamunda pub. That would've been probably...

MH: Made your own entertainment really.

AH: So that would be mid-70s. Yeah, we basically, when as kids we made our own entertainment.

MH: I think the biggest entertainment we had was like I can remember going in the Kalamunda Club when I was really young and down here the tennis club would put on - cos mum was full on into tennis, they'd put on a Christmas party for the kids, entertainment like that.

(35:09)

That was - oh, I can remember that. That's back in - years ago. I mean, as you grew up, I think there wasn't much. I can't remember much, just everyone played sport. I think that arts festival's been going for a fair while. I mean, but people would've talked about that in their different areas. I've been kind of involved in sport a fair bit, up in Kalamunda, like I say, but besides that I can't remember doing a lot. Water skiing in summer and footy in wintertime, and cricket. That's how it used to roll, you know, you didn't do much else when you were a kid growing up. Used to have Saturday morning cricket, as they do now.



AH: The only thing we did was go to the bottom of the hill to the drive-in.

**Okay.**

MH: Yeah, down on, Hawtin Road. Yeah, just up where McDonalds (in Forrestfield) is and all that on the right there, used to be a drive-in there. It was great. That was about it. The biggest thing I think was Friday night, Saturday nights, everyone used to go to the drive-ins.

AH: Well, because there was nothing in the city in those days. We were all too young, I suppose.

MH: It was too far to go, I mean, we didn't drive or things like that. The buses were just flat out during the week picking kids up from school and that but I think getting up and down to work.

AH: I think they stopped about nine (9) o'clock at night.

MH: Yeah, you couldn't -

AH: You know like, 'Oh, nine (9) o'clock!'. The last bus left Perth about eight (8pm) because it used to take a good forty five (45), fifty (50) minutes.

MH: Take an hour to get home, that's for sure. The 305 used to come up Lesmurdie hill, I think, the 302 come up Kalamunda hill and there's a 299 that was probably the quickest that I ever found. That went through actually Lesmurdie, I think. Anything else?

**Well, just talking about Perth. Did you go to Perth as a special occasion maybe, or very often?**

MH: No.

AH: I'd go to Perth a fair bit because my dad has his business in there. I lost my mum on Kalamunda Road in 1974 and once my mum died then quite often we would, after school, catch the bus into the city because by the time dad got home it was too late. So we were heading into the city quite a fair bit then and that was, oh, when I was thirteen (13), twelve (12) when I lost mum in July so, yeah. And we'd head down to the city just about every day. My dad just didn't want to come home and cook so there was not a great deal up here to eat, so we'd to eat in the city or Midland was the other place. Midland had some nice restaurants we used to go to. Other than that, I guess for Anzac Day, because my dad was fairly heavily involved with Anzac stuff so we'd go to the city then but, yeah. I think maybe when we were probably about fourteen (14), when I was about fourteen (14), fifteen (15), I might've caught it [the bus] in with girlfriends on Saturday mornings to go to the movies, and then we'd do an early movie and then go back to my dad's shop and he'd bring us home. The bus was just a bit too 'staggerish' on the weekends. Other than that, no. Did you go into the city much?

MH: Oh, maybe once in a blue moon on a Saturday morning, go in there, see what's going on. I mean, I think they'd just done up Hay Street Mall back in those days. We had a beach house down in Safety Bay. We never went in there (Perth) much at all, so not on my side I can think of. I mean there's too many hassles, you know. I mean, as you got older, you go in there, you're drink driving, you know, then it all

started then so you kind of, yeah, you kind of had to watch what you're doing; but, no, just kind of stayed locally. Mainly parties, when you're that age.

AH: Everyone knew everyone so everyone'd rock up to the party and you'd very rarely find a fight. You know, because in those days we used to have the 'boggers' and the surfers.

MH: Bog surfies and skinheads.

AH: Skinheads and stuff, yeah, you know all those little things but it wouldn't matter. They could still rock up to the party and be told to get lost and they'd go, or they'd sort of just hang out the front, but there was hardly ever fights.

MH: Oh, there was heaps of fights.

AH: Well, I obviously didn't go to the same places you went to then.

MH: Oh, it's just things I suppose.

AH: Being a lot younger than you though, see that's why.

MH: Yeah.

AH: Cos you would've been doing it all while I was still in.

(40:05)

MH: Nappies.

AH: Nappies, yeah.

MH: I don't know about nappies (laughs). Entertainment, that was about it, just you used to hang [out], you had your friends and that's it. Probably similar to what the kids do these days. Nothing much has changed really in that respect.

AH: Oh, we did have some good bands at the pub though. The Kala pub did have some good bands but that was when Debbie, I can't even think of her surname, when her folks had it, they used to bring a couple of good bands.

MH: But the greatest, I would've loved, I've never seen it. I've seen the tracks but it would've been huge if you could get a bit of history in. My brother would probably be able to help you. I mean, he's sixty two (62). The train that used to come up, that would've been an icon that was. Charlie Court knocked that on the head when he was in power. Don't know what for but the old steam train used to go up the hill and could never turn, as you would understand, it used to go up that way and just zig zag up the hill. Today, it's still legendary. If they had that running, imagine the tourists? Because you can see where it used to come through Gooseberry Hill, come through there and then all the way out, you follow it all right out through and you got it through the back of the industrial [area]. I mean I don't know if you've ever been for a ride, on a pushbike, you can still ride right out through that way and you'd go - you'd head right out through to Karagullen – I mean Hackett's Gully. And they used to bring the timber in from Barton's Mill, right out through there the train line used to link up everywhere. That's where they used to bring it all down to before they cut the timber, and then they used to cart it all in to the wharfs and all that round Freo and all that sort of thing.

AH: It'd be good if they did open it up. It would inject substantial money.

MH: I mean the infrastructure's still there. Well, what they could do these day, I mean if ever they did that, Kalamunda would just be going 'whomp'. I mean everyone thinks about it, things like the way it used to get up there and things like that. I mean, you've got the one that does, the only steam train you got is the one that does (coughs).

AH: Dwellingup.

MH: Dwellingup out there. We went on that with mum, she loved it. Used to bring back memories for her. Anything else?

**Yes, just a little about, I guess, yourselves after school, workwise and things like that. What did you do after school, training or working?**

AH: No, basically.

MH: What, after we left school?

**Yeah, after you left school.**

MH: Right-oh.

AH: After I left school, I moved out of Kalamunda and moved down to Morley, or Balcatta way, because there was just nothing up here.

MH: I, have you finished?

AH: Yeah.

MH: I stayed in the hills. I went down to just short of, it was Tom Thumb Nursery I think, just over the road in High Wycombe there. I done my apprenticeship, there's two (2) big green sheds down there called V.F. Kings & Son. I did four (4) years apprenticeship there and then dad had a service station down in Belmont so I took that on and kind of leap-frogged from there and done many things. That's about it. I mean virtually that was up to, I think it was '84 before I actually left and then went farming and then did a bit of that and came back.

AH: How did you get your apprenticeship?

MH: Through my sister's boyfriend. He owned the business (laughs), Squiggles, Andy Halfyard.

AH: That's Barb or Diane's?

MH: Diane.

AH: I wonder if they ever advertised anything up here?

MH: Didn't have to back in those days, it was the only joinery shop for ages. It was a carpenter/joiner, the apprenticeship was. They did cupboards and joinery. A local bloke up here lives on Orange Valley Road, Mick Williams, he used to be an owner/builder. I forget the name, the company he used to work for, we'd do a lot of work for them; contract to them. That was all good, specialised in certain things.

**Ok, and a little bit about, I guess, yourselves as a couple and your families a little bit, when did you meet or go out or get married.**

AH: We met, well.

MH: At school (laughs).

AH: - thirty seven (37) years ago probably. Michael used to be my brother's mate at school and then Michael used to be my basketball coach when I was thirteen (13). He used to train us for basketball, a bunch of ratbag girls.

(45:05)

MH: That was probably, sorry for butting in here, Neet, but that's probably, the outing was a Friday night at the basketball. Truly, that was it, that was your outing.

AH: That and Sundays for footy.

MH: Yeah, Sundays was the footy and basketball was Friday nights and everyone - because you'd train Tuesday, Thursdays, we would, and then that was for the whole week. Back in those days, the whole - well, our side, I don't know whether anyone else did, but the whole week was just full of sport, wasn't it? Basketball one night, you know, training one night, basketball, then you've got footy training and then you'd play Sundays and then you'd play basketball Fridays. I think basketball was virtually a summertime thing, wasn't it?

AH: Yeah. Netball was the winter one, wasn't it?

MH: Yeah, but that was entertainment really, wasn't it?

AH: When I was seventeen (17) I left Kalamunda, moved away and then ten (10) years ago I moved back and caught up with Michael again and obviously, we just, you know, made eyes across the room, realised we were in love and we got married two (2) years ago.

MH: Yeah. We've been together for ten (10) years.

AH: Nearly ten (10), and I've got two (2) children: a son, he works for Michael, he's twenty three (23) this year and my daughter is twenty one (21) and then our two (2) step boys - Michael's two (2) boys, thirteen (13) and fifteen (15) this year.

**So what made you decide to come back to Kalamunda?**

AH: My dad. I sort of had a bit of a horrible experience with my last partner of eighteen (18) and a half years and didn't want it anymore, so I thought, 'right.' My son was starting high school, he was thirteen (13), so I thought it's time to bring him back to real school, because we were living in Broome at the time and they had to cart their books to and from school every day. You know when you are thirteen (13), that's a lot of books to cart. There's no lockers, no nothing. A lot of the education was done over the phone. The population wasn't there; so I thought, 'right, come back' and I needed to be with my dad for a while.

MH: He was pretty crook, after he had that stroke.

AH: So I came back and spent some time with him and here I am today.

**Okay, well, we're just about finished. You mentioned some of the businesses in the area. Do you know of any local identities or really prominent people in the community, other than the one's you've mentioned, that stand out?**

MH: In the business?

**Either, in community groups or the RSL?**

AH: What was that guy's name that used to be some politician that lived up here?

MH: He just died. He lived on the corner of Heath Road and Boonooloo. He was a Liberal candidate.

AH: Didn't he have the autistic son?

MH: Yeah. I'm not too sure. I forget his name actually. Thompson? Len Thompson. I suppose when you think about it looking down through, I can remember the lady who used to have the, where I think it is Haynes on Kalamunda, where Barb does hair.

AH: Haynes on Hair.

MH: Haynes on Hair, there used to be a little shop there, a record shop. She's in the actual Shire now, she runs for Shire. Dark haired lady. I think she's actually in at the moment.

AH: Not Elizabeth?

MH: Yeah, Elizabeth Taylor, is it?

AH: Yeah.

MH: Elizabeth Taylor. I remember her because I used to deliver the Daily News to her. She had a record shop in there. The other one, I suppose, is Kostera's Garage. Not the actual service side of thing, but Stewart, and his young son Stewart. Yeah, I mean, when you look around, there's not many people. I suppose there was one, he passed on though. O'Hara's Chemist was there for years and years, next to Sebastian's. And I don't know who's running that now. Then there was another chemist up the top, Driscoll's. Do you remember Driscoll's?

AH: Yeah.

MH: Driscoll's; that's been there for years and years. They were beautiful people. And Camparti's. That used to be Camparti's Chemist. They used to live just down the road here, come down here turn right, the first on the left.

(50:07)

AH: No, no, I'm trying to think where Matt Camparti's was, because the Driscoll's, I went to school with Jane so we used to go up there after school, up the top there and wasn't Matt Camparti had his.

MH: I don't know what the old man's name was. I know the girl Sue was Barbara's age. Sue Camparti. I know they used to live there and they had a pharmacy (coughs). I can't remember much of the identities.

AH: When you leave we'll go, 'oh, we didn't even think about..'

**That's all right, I can stick it in later, put some notes in. So I guess it's mainly just the business owners.**

MH: Yeah, just trying to think. Well, Hawleys shoe store; there you go. That's held its name since day dot. Mr and Mrs Hawley, Bob and Roma Hawley, they used to [be], where the Kalamunda pub, you know they've got that little coffee shop out in the alfresco? That used to be their shoe store, that's where they first started. I bought my first pair of footy boots off them. Remember then up there?

AH: Mmm.

MH: Yeah, they were there. I forgot about that one. Yeah, old Bob and Roma, and they had three (3) daughters, I think three (3) daughters and no boys. They lived in Brook Street actually and they were there for years. They actually moved down to Barberry Square. They opened up Barberry Square and it's always been Hawley's Shoe Store, and then I think the Mann's bought it after that.

AH: I can't think of, oh, what's the optometrist up in Coles? Hasn't he been around for years. I can't think of his name.

MH: Where is he?

AH: Next to the hairdressing salon in Coles, down the other end near Mary Anne and-

MH: No, he hasn't been there long, no. I don't remember him being there. That's Specs, isn't it?

**No, no, the other one.**

AH: No, no.

MH: I'm not too sure of that.

AH: I think he's been in town for a long time as an optometrist, not necessarily in that shopping centre but I think he's been here for a long time. I can't think of anyone else. Oh, the couple that have the jewellery store, Adina Jewellery. They had the jewellery store in Barberry Square originally.

MH: I wouldn't have been looking at jewellery. Don't worry about that.

AH: No, of course not.

MH: So when is your assignment, or when has it got to be - - - How long you got to do that? You're just doing research still, are you?

**Yes, still doing research.**

MH: How come you picked Kalamunda, cos you're a local girl?

**Yes.**

MH: What was your last name?

**du Boulay.**

MH: And mum and dad grown up - - -

**Yeah, mum grew up in Maida Vale but dad grew up here.**

MH: What's his first name?

**Chris.**

MH: Christopher. Is he still working?

**Yes.**

MH: Whereabouts do you live?

**Temby Avenue.**

MH: That's where old Mrs Newman – do you know her? You live down further?

**About halfway down.**

AH: She lives at number three (3) Temby Avenue.

MH: What's Roxy's mate's name? They've lived here for years and years and years. Old Mrs Newman would be a beauty to get. She'd be able to tell you some stuff. Have you had many old people talk to you?

**Yes, I've had a few old people I talked to.**

AH: They'd sort of bring back a lot of blast from the past.

**I'll have to knock on her door and see if she's interested.**

AH: She's got the little cyclone type fence, not the first, the second driveway. She's fantastic.

MH: What's old Roxy's mates, a little red haired lady? Michelle Murphy. There's Newman and the next one, No.1 I think - - -

AH: Oh, right on the corner there. Yeah, Murphy.

MH: They've been there for years and years. Jeez, they'd be fairly old now.

AH: Yeah, that'd be a good one, get the two (2) of them together.

MH: Oh, they'd rattle some stuff off for you. They'd know how things have changed and , I mean, the little school. Jeez, the primary school was tiny. My sister-in-law's been a teacher up in the primary school for twenty (20) years, I think, Yvonne. Yeah, twenty (20) years. She's been up there since then, a fair while. Old Bruce Lever, he was a high school teacher. The Lever's, I don't know if they still live in Spring Road. They'd be a good one to contact.

(55:16)

AH: He lived here for a long time.

MH: Bruce? Have you been down the local club? Actually, the good one to get is, the old Scatter's would tell you a fair bit, wouldn't he? Brian Quartermaine. Yeah, he lives on Urch Road. He'd be a real good one to get hold of he's a friend of ours.

AH: So what do you actually do with your research? You put it together and - - -

**Yeah, I put it all together and the interviews are going to the library, so that other people can have a look at them and read them. And basically I'm just putting them together into an essay really and a bit of a history just to see what people have said and compare the responses.**

MH: Is it much changed? There's people talking about much?

**Yeah, some of the older people are saying about houses on Haynes Street before some of the shops came in and, so things have changed.**

MH: That would've been interesting.

**You know, tennis courts and stuff.**

MH: Yeah, the old tennis courts down here. You would probably have heard a lot of stories over and over again.

**No, not really.**

AH: On Haynes Street.

MH: Oh, sorry. I didn't even know that.

AH: Yeah, well, I mean, well before our time I'd say.

**So it's really interesting getting your memories and comparing what I've heard before. It's really good.**

AH: Cos the oldies would remember so much, then we remember our era because they probably were at home, not out and about, you know, seeing everything we saw.

MH: That's good. I hope we've helped a little bit anyway, but Dicko would've been great. He would've been really good. He would've let you know because I mean, they used to get around on horses back in their days, and things like that, but he's, like I said, he's sixty two (62), sixty three (63) this year I think and he's kind of born and bred like the rest of us. We've been here for years. As I said, I think mum and dad's first house was in Cotherstone Road there. It was a little bunky. When they got married they had – they lived over the road on the corner where you turn into Cotherstone Road down the high school, there used to be a little house there. Remember that, Neet?

AH: On the left there.



MH: On the left there, there was always just – oh, you would've burnt the thing down. That's where they first lived and their mother owned – nanna owned Kalamunda. (sound of sirens) They bought it off her when she moved down to Doubleview, or somewhere like that. They used to come up here for holidays, that's how they ended up living here. They used to come up from the coast, up from Cottesloe. Mum lived in Cottesloe.

AH: A day's journey then.

MH: Yeah, he'd get to the old Dodge. We used to have an old Dodge down the back but it's all rusted out now, that mum and dad used to get around in. It's a beauty. Ours is one of probably the only blocks hanging in there, that hasn't been built on. The guy next door us, 37 and 35, I think. Yeah, my brother Derek owns 47. Mum and dad's was 37 and he's 47. Next door would be 35, but they're the two (2) biggest blocks there. Everyone's chasing the site, well, not super hard.

AH: Everyone wants to put more flats up.

MH: Well, I remember the old days in Forrestfield, God, I probably would've been eight (8), and they were still doing the old thunder boxes. The old guy would come round the back, come on his horse and cart and get rid of the old smellies once a week. The old newspaper, that was pretty rough.

AH: Another ten (10) years' time, this will be gopher city.

MH: Oh, will be for sure, you can see that now.

AH: Just with all the units going up.

MH: They're not looking at-

AH: They're not going to develop it for the young kids that are here, it's all going to be -

MH: Have you heard much about that?

**A little bit, just what I've sort of noticed.**

MH: You can't half pick that. It's not going to be a place where kids would want to settle. I mean it is good -

AH: It would be good for a certain age and then I think - - -

MH: Once they turn about – I mean, it depends on the kids, but once your kid's up and moving you'd probably move out. Well, we're virtually looking at it ourselves now. It's not because the company, and I must be truthful, Neet's father's passed on and his family doesn't live up here anymore. She's a sibling of seven (7). There is one brother, I suppose, at the end of the day and I got a brother. One works in the mines. He lives in mum's house now with his kids and family, my brother lives in Kalamunda and they bought a flat block. They'll probably be here for a long time 'cos their girls are only nineteen (19) and twenty one (21), I should say, coming up to, but at the end of the day they're pretty happy what they're doing but it's just the older gopher country, it'll be really good. Once you start moving out-

AH: His sister lives out in - - -

MH: One lives in Lesmurdie and one lives in Gooseberry Hill but it's not that we don't love each other, because everyone's so busy with their kids and what they do that no-one gets time to see anyone so really you might see each other at Christmas and you might talk to each other -

AH: Basically, when I met Michael, he was here, you know, we both were here for a reason. It was for his mum and I was here for my dad. Now that sadly they've both passed on, we don't have anything here besides siblings, but your siblings will come and visit you anywhere. We were sort of here for just for mum and dad's company and for their sake to live close by in case things happened.

MH: In the last year's, that's virtually why I come back. I crayfished out of Cervantes, just short of Jurien, for twelve (12) years; I mean that was a seasonal thing and then I'd come back here for three (3) months and go back there for nine (9) virtually. I did that for twelve (12) years on and off.

AH: But we can see that this is just, you know, we're not old. Our age might say, you know, like when we were kids and someone said they were fifty (50), oh, you were ancient, you know. Like today, I still think that we're quite hip for fifty (50) year olds and there's still a lot of living left in us.

MH: As long as the body holds up, we're grinning.

AH: And Kalamunda's not the place.

MH: It's just so far for us. I mean you'd love to turn around and I mean, you've either gotta be right out of it, go up Chittering, Bullsbrook, or anything that way - through up that way - or something like that, and have a bit of land, have three (3) or four (4) acres, where you just get up and kick the dog and get up and 'how you going, mate?' like this, you know; or get on a bike and go and have a look at something down - a water hole or something like that. It's either that or the other way is to get out and go to live in somewhere where you can get up, you got a coffee strip or something, Kalamunda. The hardest thing I find with Kalamunda is there's nothing - our kids there's nothing here and that's the biggest thing with my kids. My kids are thirteen (13) and Neet might've found it with her kids when she first come back when they were thirteen (13) and eleven (11) and even then there's nothing changed. The Kalamunda Pool, and they've just built a couple of skate ramps. I mean if you're not into sports, you've got nothing else to do but be a ratbag. I mean, you grew up in Broome, and your kids have grown up with bloody surf clubs and things like that and they had a ball doing that and no doubt they would've kept on going if you probably didn't move down there.

(1:02:54)

AH: Or if we moved closer to the beach but living up here it was just too hard to take them to the beach every Sunday. Like I said there's nothing for the kids.

MH: And still to this day, I mean you have because there's not enough cricket sites, and it's growing; it's pathetic. They could have probably eight (8) cricket sides on a Saturday morning. They could do but they don't. You don't know someone, it's like who you know is what you know and to get in. My boys aren't real keen to do it, they'd like to but one will probably play tennis or cricket then they'll turn around and they're old enough to get involved with the school now if they want to do that. That's all good but at the end of the day there's nothing really. Our boys are doing exactly the same as what we did when we were kids, got on their bikes and just ride down

Whistlepipe and just piss fart around with their mates and go and find jumps and they'll go out to Lesmurdie which is good. I mean, Lesmurdie has got a huge big skate park. What have they got at Kalamunda? Nothing. Look what they've got at Forrestfield. Look at what they've got at High Wycombe. Look what they've got at Maida Vale. Everything, everything there. Look what the facilities they've got there in Forrestfield and even High Wycombe now.

AH: I suppose they figure that's more central than here if they put it down there.

MH: But the place is blowing out the back doors out, you know, out through Roleystone. Not so much Roleystone I suppose, out through the back of Walliston. Look how big Walliston is now. That's huge. I mean Pomeroy Road, you know, I used to drive there, it was all bush, now there's houses everywhere.

AH: Bush and kangaroos.

MH: Yeah. It's disappointing I reckon because the community, it's all old farts up there. Really just it's all for themselves. It's like they're in the know how, they make the decisions and no matter what you say, little one vote's not gonna work. That's the way I look at it. I feel sorry for all the old people. Neet's in age care: she works in UCH down in Bentley and you see it everyday, don't you Neet, through the job you do, just the old people, I mean the way they talk and no-one cares. No-one cares. These days, half their kids don't care.

AH: That's the saddest part. It's really sad.

MH: No-one cares and Kalamunda Shire don't care. You go up there, all they're worried about is what they get and people are being driven that way these days, as what I end up in my pocket. But the thing is, the more money they earn the more money they spend the more money they owe. I mean, it's not that, everyone likes to live comfortably. You've tried it and everyone will do it and you'll find, growing up yourself, I think. I mean you've talked to so many people, you know, like people are just happy. Some people like Scatters he's just happy, plays the TAB on Saturday, he goes and has a beer Friday night and he might go for one Sunday night and family days are Sunday, and things like this. He might do that; he hasn't changed one little bit.

AH: He's got his routine.

MH: He's got his routines and he'll do it. He's just about retired. He works for Western Power, he does that. But you know then you've got other guys, I mean, people have just got their routines, what they do. If you live up here you have to kind of - people go to the bowling club. I mean, you know what it's like yourself. I mean, it's not cheap to go out anymore, is it? We've just come back from Sydney and like I mean we just virtually, ourselves - I mean, it's stupid, because we tried to shop a bit in Kalamunda but you know you go to IGA and it's just a complete nightmare there. I mean, what a stupid place, I mean, fair enough, but you'd think they'd do something, divert traffic. I know they can't but like it's just an absolute nightmare. It's going to be not before long before there's a big major on that corner there. I mean, Kalamunda Shire really haven't thought about it. I mean, they've got themselves to blame. Like I said, all they're worried about is what they can make out of it and what they do, and it's given nothing to the community in Kalamunda. I mean for instance, look at where they've put a Muzz Buzz in. How pathetic where they've put it. Blocked the whole [carpark] they put a Muzz Buzz in and how people

get in and out that thing, it's a joke. Then they turn around and that's going to be an Auto One shop, that one up there.

AH: They're going to put a roundabout there.

MH: Yeah, I mean, they got no thought at all.

AH: Tell me, on your travels, sorry, love, to change the subject, has anyone spoken to you about the nunnery?

**No, they haven't.**

MH: St Emilies, yeah.

**I've read a little bit about it but no-one has really mentioned it.**

MH: They were all the nuns from Mary's Mount. They were, they come from Mary's Mount.

AH: Originally, I don't think they came from Mary's Mount though.

MH: Yeah, always. They did originally, but as I say, the parish.

AH: Yeah, but not originally. I mean the nunnery was put here. There was a reason why it was put here and then the nuns from there started to go there.

MH: I don't know. You know more than me. There used to be a big swimming pool out the front of there.

**Really.**

MH: Yeah, it was huge. Ask some of the oldies. Where they built that there was a huge, they've filled it in now, big pool. As you come up to the first, and you come down Kalamunda, the first driveway, just on the left here you'll see a big lawn area.

**Oh, yeah.**

MH: There used to be a huge big pool. I've had a swim in there.

AH: Has anyone ever spoken to you about the Lesmurdie Hospital?

**No.**

MH: Oh, yeah. Oh, I forgot about that. Yeah, that's over the road from Sanderson Road. You know St Brigid's?

**Yep.**

MH: At the end there. There used to be an old, Jeez, I don't even know if that house is still there.

AH: Big two (2) storey house.

MH: Big two (2) storey house it was. Yeah, Lesmurdie Hospital. It must've been there. It's huge. It was the only hospital up here before Kalamunda got built, 'cos

that shopping centre. There was a shop always over the road from there. There's one for you.

**Thanks for that.**

AH: I don't know too much. I mean I visited my great grandmother in there a couple of times.

MH: You used to drive down where the middle of St Brigid's. You come along, was it, Canning Road, but you turned right and you followed that straight down past the oval. You used to follow it up and that's where the hospital used to be up there on the right.

AH: Lesmurdie Road, love, not Canning Road.

MH: Lesmurdie Road, sorry, down Lesmurdie Road, yeah. Yeah, I dead set forgot about that.

AH: That was a really ancient sort of hospital, that was.

MH: That was like back in Fawlty Towers. You know Fawlty Towers? (laughs) Manuel getting around. Midge Ellis used to work there, Colin Ellis. I remember that now. That was her name, Midge Ellis.

AH: Just to get a bit of background on-

MH: Some oldies might - that might twig their brain. They might know about it.

AH: I don't know whether you want to go that far with Lesmurdie but even just for the nunnery here.

**Yeah, I'm surprised no-one's said anything about it.**

MH: That was huge that was.

AH: Well yeah, cos I mean the nunnery on Sundays, oh, you'd see them all out the front there and, you know, cos they were obviously walking into the church or chapel or whatever they were doing but; yeah, that was really, really busy. I remember that when we were kids, always seeing a lot of people in there.

(1:10:08)

MH: I think they used to retreat up from Perth. They would've had to have done, and they had to do oh, not penance, but they'd do whatever they did in there, and I think that's what it was for, a sort of retreat kind of thing, you know, your kids go to retreat at Como or somewhere like that. Yeah, that's a good one, the old Lesmurdie Hospital. I can't think of much more that was around.

AH: But I mean if you do happen to knock on Mrs Newman or Mrs Murphy's door, just twig them. They'll know for sure.

MH: They'll talk like Dorrie Evans of Kalamunda.

AH: You wouldn't know who Dorrie Evans was would you?

**No.**

MH: A character off No. 96, Mrs busybody. Mrs Mangles – you know Mrs Mangles?

AH: Out of the soapies.

MH: Who's a Mrs busybody in Neighbours or Home and Away?

AH: Just someone who knew everyone and knew what was happening in town. You wanted to know any goss, you'd always ask those two (2).

MH: Go to the coffee shops and meet the blue rinse mob, Yvonne's mob, they'd let you know. They haven't been here that many years.

MH: Derek would've been good. He would've been able to help you. He would've told you all about 'cos I think he spent a lot of time down there. I think, because the first brothers were here, the only reason I know 'cos we're Catholic, was out at Mazenod and the priest, they used to live in the parish up at Kalamunda, and I think they still do. They were the only priests around here. They had nothing to do. They weren't allowed down the old penguin joint (laughs).

**So just wrapping it all up, what do you think is special about Kalamunda as a place? Has it still got a special vibe?**

MH: I think, myself, just the memories. It is nice. I mean, probably the first night here we had about, Neet's had about nine (9) kookaburras on the fence there and she feeds the maggies [magpies]. I mean it is, it's quite - I mean, except for that road up there you don't get idiots. It's a place that's grown, but it's still always going to have fond memories. It's always going to be home to me, til the day I die, you know, cos I've spent so much time here. Its home but like, as they say, home's home but you've gotta move on, you can't sit and dwell about things.

AH: I think the thing too that it has the gum trees, you know. I mean as much as I hate the leaves in the pool and raking up the leaves and everything else-

MH: It's relaxing.

AH: - it's just living, you know, like John Williamsons' song, 'Living among the gum trees'. You don't get that city life, you know. For me to just sit out there and just hand feed kookaburras and magpies, I would never get that in city life. But I think you get to a stage too that you find that there's better things in my life to do than gardening, hence, why I'm walking around at the moment like a cripple, 'cos I've just hurt my back gardening. I think, you know, kids are grown up, we need to downsize. Let someone else take over the property and enjoy living up here.

MH: I mean, it's for a young family. I bought this in '92. I mean, with my wife then and then we split up and then she went her way and I went mine. But the reason we bought it was, as they say, 'location, location'. When we brought it there was Kalamunda Road; we were then going to send our boys to Trinity, down in Perth because in the morning they're airheads, they could've walked down, you could still walk down the side of the hill from East Terrace, there's steps down there. You can get a bus straight to Perth. They get off, they don't have to cut across I suppose then walk up the hill. Besides that, I think is the primary school 'cos my sister-in-law taught there and she would've kept an eye on them. We'd walk over this road and

walk straight through the bush track behind the primary school. I don't know whether you went to primary school up here, did you?

**Yes.**

MH: You know, where you did these cross countries and that. You walk along there and it was five (5) minutes, six (6) minutes at the most.

AH: You'll just have to excuse me for two secs.

MH: Yeah, six (6) minutes at its most to turn around and get to town. I mean, that's why we loved it, and plus mum lived in Boonooloo road, my brother lives in Boonooloo Road. It's not too hard to get to Gooseberry Hill and I only went to Lesmurdie when my sister.

AH: It's walking distance to Kalamunda.

MH: Well, that's it, but I think memories for me, I mean Kalamunda is, hey, I've had some fun here. You never forget them. Like Neet's probably said, it has and it was really relaxing. The people next door, they've lived here a fair while in that house and they've been there over twenty five (25) years, thirty (30) years I think; an old Pommie couple. The backyard's as big as our house and he's had enough, time to move on. He says once his dogs have died they'd have that freedom. He walks his dogs every morning and you walk around here and it's safe. That's one aspect. I mean at this stage I think you're pretty well safe, I would say, wouldn't you Neet?

(1:15:35)

AH: Oh, yes, that's one thing.

MH: That's one thing. You could live in Mt Lawley, like that, and you might go to a local oval and there's needles and all that. I think at that stage, yeah, you probably would find 'em if you really looked hard but I'm sure still to this day, outside the footy club there, the junior footy club, I don't think there's anyone found anything. I haven't heard of anything but I hope they don't. I think it's pretty well safe still. If you're involved in a sport and the kids are involved in this one and that one, I'm pretty sure people are good people up here. I mean you get good and bad anywhere but the majority, 80%, are good people which is still good for young families. We're at that age now we wouldn't mind giving something else a crack. You'd always have a laugh up here. You always run into someone and you still do to this day.

AH: There will always be a love for Kalamunda. Its home. It'll always be home, regardless of what, born and bred, parents have lived here for a long time.

MH: I mean you just sit back, we sit back as a family and we all get together. We all sit back and have a laugh, remember this and remember that. I mean that's always a good humour, you know, this one done this. Do you have many brothers and sisters?

**Just the one.**

MH: I mean it'll always be home. Our age now it's probably time, once my boys – they go to Mazenod – set up and get themselves organised, they'll be pretty well right. They live with their mother in Lesmurdie so they've got the best of both worlds. They go there and they come here on the weekends, so it's just good. They

have plenty to do. There's plenty to do if you want to. It depends how much a kid wants to do these days. I don't know what your parents were like but growing up with Nintendo and all this sort of stuff, it's just a day and age thing I suppose but at the end of the day it doesn't do much. Kalamunda's, I suppose you'd know yourself, I mean you've probably had some good times and had some good friends but you'll probably find you'll meet someone and move on. You don't know what you'll do. It'll always be home and the birds and some mornings you walk out there and except for the heat when you walk out there, we see the planes coming in and out a little bit where we're situated.

AH: I think that's the other side, sitting here and looking out the window and looking at the lights. You're not looking into a neighbour's window.

MH: Even though we've got a window there, and fence down there the house got built, we'd always hoped the house would get built further up that way, but it's all good. Looking out you're not looking into, that's one good thing with Kalamunda. And it's now getting to be all flats and things like that because Neet's come from a big block and so have we and it's out of control. You walk out, oh don't say that, your neighbour might say what about this, what about that.

AH: A seachange would be good, sit and listen to the ocean roll for a while now. I did that when I lived on Rottnest for a couple of years and really enjoyed listening to that. From Rottnest I moved to Alice Springs. From the ocean to the desert.

MH: Then to Broome.

AH: Back to the ocean again.

**Well, I'll wrap it up, and thank you very much for your time and your memories. It's been excellent.**

MH: No worries

AH: No dramas, hopefully we've been able to help.

**Definitely.**

Interview ends 1 hour 19 minutes



**Oral History interview**

**Interviewee**

**Interview date: 1 March 2013**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 1st March 2013, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing [interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed] for my Curtin University thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**Good morning [interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed].**

Good morning Alethea.

**I'd just like to start with your name and your birth date please.**

My official name is [interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed].

**I might have to get you to spell that before I go.**

[name is spelt out]

**Excellent, thank you.**

Do I have to spell them?

**No that's fine.**

Ok.

**Thank you though. And your birthdate?**

My birthday is on the 21<sup>st</sup> of the 3<sup>rd</sup> [March], '23.

**So it's coming up.**

Yes I'll be ninety (90) (laughs).

**Can you tell me a little about your family, your parents and any siblings?**

My family, I have two (2) daughters and both of them have four (4) children. Luukje is my eldest daughter, they are all married. Two of them have three (3) children, one has two (2) and one has one (1). So that's nine (9) in total but number ten (10) is coming (laughs). And that's my family from here. My other daughter, Allison, she married a man who had three (3) children already. So they are her stepchildren and then she got a daughter of her own, so that is another grandchild. That is my family.

**Do you want to tell me anything about your parents or your own siblings?**

My parents, well we lived in Holland of course, and I think that's the photo that you just turned over. My mother passed away at fifty (50), my father reached ninety two (92). We had a very happy secluded life, there's not much to tell about them. We moved from Tiel, where I was born, to Nijmegen, that's a big town and we lived there for many years before I came to Australia. My mother never knew that I went to Australia because she had cancer and during the War it was all very awkward. And then they didn't have the medication like they have now.

**So what made you decide to come to Australia?**

Well I was engaged at the time, in 1947 I became engaged, and we were getting married. Then my fiancé, at the time, he always wanted to go back to Indonesia

because they had lived there before the War they had lived in Indonesia and he loved it as a child. His parents were there, his father had a job there and he lived there with his parents and his brother. He just loved it, he said to me 'I'd like to go back and live in Indonesia' and then he was offered a job, a very good job in Indonesia, but when he went to the Embassy they couldn't assure him that he would have to go into the Army because Holland was at war with, you know it was just starting with Indonesia, and he didn't want that because he said 'then you are in a strange country and I'm not there, that's not fair'.

(5:51)

So he didn't accept this good job, but then he met his cousin who was an officer in the Merchant Navy who travelled all around the world and he came one weekend and he talked with him, and my fiancé at the time, he said 'where would you like to live if you had the choice?' and he said 'there are only two (2) countries in the world that I would like to go besides Holland'. And it was Canada and Australia. Then Luke said 'Australia, that's close to Indonesia'. So he said to me 'what about if we go to Australia first and then when the war is over in Indonesia we can just hop over to Indonesia'. That's what happened, that's why we went to Australia. But of course we never left because things went all wrong over there and all the Dutch people that were there went either back to Holland or came to Australia. I met a lot of them here in Kalamunda actually. So that went by the board but then things went [well], maybe this comes in the further questions. I married my husband by proxy so my papers all had to go to the Queen and the Queen was on holidays in Switzerland so she signed my papers in Switzerland in a holiday resort and then that came back to me. Then I could marry by proxy, that means he was here, because he had left already in December and I was coming here in May because my father wouldn't let me go. He said 'no, you're not' he said to Luke 'you go and you find out what is there and if it's no good, then you come back'. Anyway after a week I had a telegram to come because telephones were not in much use in those days, and 'you'd better come over'. So that's how it happened and then I married by proxy, that means on the date that I married he was in Australia, I was in Holland and as a stand in I had his brother (laughs).

**That would have been a bit strange.**

So that was quite interesting. So I had a wedding there and then I just went to the, because in Holland when you get married you have to go to the what do you call it, like when people that don't marry in church here go to the-

**Registry office?**

Yes. Now that's what you had to do in Holland. Everybody had to do that and then afterwards you went to the church wedding. So I decided to have that first part in Holland and my church wedding in Australia. So I wore my white dress when I came to Australia (laughs).

(10:08)

**That would have been special, more special having that in Australia.**

I was just in a suit when I was married in Holland. But I was actually went on the boat as a married woman, but I didn't consider myself married yet until I had the church service. That's what happened; I married in the Baptist Church in Claremont. So that's how I came to Australia, but I went back again. I think something comes up in the next questions.

**That's alright, you can keep going.**

We married, we lived in Scarborough and then after a few months he got a lot of pain in his back. I massaged him and we did all kinds of things, then he finished up the doctor, the specialist. We went from one specialist to another and all the specialists in those days lived in St Georges Terrace.

**Oh really?**

I think we'd been in every building, to every specialist that was available that we knew of. And nobody could help him, nobody knew what he had; and one said 'you must be homesick'. Now we thought that was so ridiculous because that was the last thing he had. I knew he wasn't homesick so we got a bit desperate and one day we had a talk with our Minister from the Baptist Church in Claremont, and mentioned it that he didn't get anywhere and that he was in so much pain. So after a few weeks he called in and said 'look a friend of mine is a specialist in Perth Hospital, maybe he can help. I'll arrange an appointment for you with him'. So then he went to see him and this man discovered what he had. He had Hodgkin's disease. In those days it was unknown and he told him he was the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) case in Australia and the first one in WA. The other three (3) were in the Eastern states. And they didn't know what to do because there was absolutely no cure, nothing that could help him and he gave him three (3) months to live. And that's the news we got in November and then he lived until the 26th of January when he passed away, he was only twenty six (26).

**Oh my goodness.**

I was expecting Luukje, so it was a very hard time.

**Had you made friends in Perth, you knew people?**

When I arrived, by the time I arrived in May, Luke had already made so many friends that when I arrived by boat there were twenty five (25) people waiting-

**That's lovely.**

And welcoming me. I was treated as their family, it was fantastic. So I have never been homesick or anything like that because people have been absolutely wonderful, the people from the Baptist Church they were fantastic. One couple they accepted us as their daughter and son and we called them mum and dad. They're not alive anymore but they were our Australian Mum and Dad and they looked after us, they were fantastic.

(15:07)

I think that has helped a lot, you know all these people, and I didn't know any of them except my husband. That was very special really and they've always been in my life because then when he passed away, but in the meantime my mother in law flew over because I sent a telegram that he was incurably ill. So she came flying over and I had her with me and the baby was due to be born within a month. So she stayed with me until Luukje was born and then she wanted to go back to Holland and I decided to go with her. So my mother in law, Luukje and I boarded the boat (laughs) and we went back to Holland and I lived there for two (2) years. Then my father and mother in law wanted, especially my father in law he had never been to Australia, he wanted to thank personally he wanted to shake the people's hands that had been so kind to us and he wanted to meet them. So he asked me to write to them, if they could come for a holiday and that he could meet them. My Australian Mum and Dad went to the Embassy and tried to get it organised, but then I got a

letter back; they couldn't do it because there was a policy in Australia you could not come for a holiday, it was after the War, 1950, things were still not you know like it is now. You could not come to Australia on a holiday unless you had family there that lived there and there was nobody because I had come to Holland. So my Australian Mum wrote at the bottom of the letter 'why don't you come back? We would love to see you and Luukje again'. And that made me think, yes and then I was oohing and ahing what to do and in Holland all my friends were married with a husband and they had a baby or whatever and I started to feel lonely. I thought I'll go back and that's what I did. When I came back here I remember before I reached Fremantle I thought what have I done? What am I going to do here with a child, I must be crazy. Anyway I arrived here and there were another twenty five (25) people waiting at the boat, welcoming us; I never saw Luukje anymore she was gone with the wind. I was told straightway there was a house for you for a month-

[break in recording]

Where was I?

**You'd just come back.**

Oh yes then I came back and I was told I could live in the Minister's house and the two (2) daughters were there, but he and his wife had gone to Sydney for a month so I could be in their house for a month. So that was lovely because then I could arrange things.

(20:08)

And get my bearings and from then on there was always somebody who looked after Luukje, I didn't have to worry about that and then I could go to the Education Department and see if I could find a job because I was a teacher. I got a job straightaway, they wanted me to start straightaway, I said 'well I don't know your methods, I don't know how you people work, I would like to find out a bit more'. Then the superintendent said 'well I know the person that can help you' and he rang Claremont, Mt Claremont School and he asked the headmaster if I could go there for a little while, for as long as I needed to observe. Then I went to Graylands School because there was a headmaster and Graylands was a hostel where all the migrants went. This headmaster got a lot of those children in his school and that's why he picked that headmaster. I went to that school, I was in every classroom, 'well' he said 'when you feel you're ready you can start'. So after a fortnight I said 'well I think I know your system and know how you work' then he rang the superintendent and they asked me where I lived or where I could live. I said 'well at the moment I'm in Claremont but that's only temporary, but I have been offered a house in Kalamunda' because my Australian Mum and Dad had a holiday home in Kalamunda and they had said you are welcome to use that. So I said 'well I could go to Kalamunda' and then I got a telegram back 'start in Kalamunda on that and that date'. It was not Kalamunda – Piesse Brook because there was a tiny little school there and they needed a teacher. So that's where I started teaching.

**Wow.**

And that's how I came to Kalamunda.

**That's a great story.**

So that answers another question.

**What were the names of your Australian Mum and Dad?**

They were Pearl and what was his name again [Ern] – (laughs) I called them Mum and Dad. I know she was Pearl and this little girl (referring to her great granddaughter) is named after her; Dicks. Mr and Mrs Dicks, but I only know them as Mum and Dad (laughs).

**That's alright.**

They were lovely people. So that's how I came to live in Kalamunda and I've lived here ever since.

**So how did you get from Kalamunda to the Piesse Brook school?**

The headmaster picked me up, I lived in Lyndhurst Road and the headmaster picked me up on the corner of Lyndhurst Road and Canning Road.

**Oh ok (laughs).**

Every morning at eight (8) o'clock I stood there on the corner and he picked me up. And we drove to Piesse Brook School. That was an experience, because coming from Holland where I had been teaching for three (3), four (4) years (laughs) coming to this little school in the middle of the bush that was an experience.

(25:04)

When I opened the back door, there was a door in the back of my classroom, and it looked straight out into the orchards. Can you remember the school?

**No.**

Can you remember in Piesse Brook, a youth hostel?

**I think I remember that.**

Well that was the school.

**Oh ok.**

It was one room and a verandah. The headmaster had the verandah and I had the classroom because I had one (1), two (2), and three (3), grades one (1), two (2), and three (3); and he had four (4), five (5) and six (6). But he didn't have as many children as I had so he was in the verandah and I was in the- because all there was, was one big classroom and a verandah. He was in the verandah and I was in the classroom. It was quite an experience and at the back was a door and you when opened it you looked out on the orchards. There was an orange tree orchard and I had never seen oranges because in Holland it was too cold (laughs) to grow oranges. The smell of the blossom came right up the hill that was fantastic. I could have written a book there, I wrote letters home, you know it was like a book because the experiences were big coming from a town with one hundred and fifty thousand (150,000) people (laughs) to this remote area. It was quite an experience but the people there were fantastic because the children, they came from every country that you could think of in Europe. I had Yugoslav, German, Swiss, Dutch, Italian, English, you think it and it was there. All these children I was teaching, it was very interesting. It was lovely and the parents were gorgeous, they were fantastic. We had a lot of barbeques and festivities together, it was a lovely town.

**How long did you teach there?**

I was there only for a year, because the next year they appointed me to Kalamunda Primary so then I taught there for a couple of years. And then they appointed me, because the Education Department you never knew what they did. They appointed you hither and thither and then I was appointed to, where did I go from there? To Rivervale. Then they sent you here and then they sent you there. I was in Darlington; I've been to so many places but always in the vicinity, on this side of Perth.

**That's good.**

Then I went with my [second] husband [Arthur] in the morning, he dropped me off at the school and came back by bus again. There was always somebody here who looked after Luukje. When I was at Kalamunda school well Luukje went to kindergarten in Kalamunda which was opposite the Post Office. Where the Post Office is now [in Barber Street], opposite there, there is a building that used to be a kindergarten. That's where Luukje went and that was only in the morning, so what happened the teacher there took Luukje back at twelve (12) o'clock to school and brought her to my classroom and she sat in my classroom. So all the children knew her very well.

(30:25)

**That would have been fun.**

The teacher lived just past the school, so she took her every morning at twelve (12) o'clock to school and then in the afternoon she was with me in the classroom.

**I'll ask you a bit about your memories of Kalamunda now. Kalamunda at that time, what was it like?**

Kalamunda in those days was totally different. The corner of the top of Haynes Street when you look from the library, the left corner, there was Ken Dunn and he had a kind of a deli, deli tearoom. That's how I knew it when I first came to Australia, and then on the other side where the Thai restaurant [is], that was Thompson. There was a grocery kind of store and past him was a little shop that was built onto the building and there was a Mrs Wood. Mrs Wood sold dresses and everything that women need. I remember (laughs) she was an identity because she always stood outside the shop, if she wasn't working in the shop, outside the shop trying to get people to come inside. Oh she always had excuses, 'come and have a look at this' and 'have a look at that' (laughs).

**Did it work?**

Yes, you could never pass there, she would grab you. At the bottom of Haynes Street was Kash and Karry and the Kookaburra, Mrs McInerney. Mrs McInerney ran the Kookaburra; that was a kind of deli kind of thing too. Oh there was a fish and chips shop, just around the corner in Canning Road. And where the bank is, the Commonwealth Bank, there was a shop Underwood, you may have heard of them?

**Yes I've heard of them.**

And we had our own shop, the hardware, Kalamunda TV and Hardware. And that was where the real estate now is. That was opposite Kostera, we were opposite Kostera, but Kostera is not there anymore.

**No.**

You remember that part?

**No, but people have told me about that.**

There was a garage. And then there was a little shop between the corner shop and next to the corner shop in Haynes Street was a little shop and that was run by a Dutch lady. That was a vegetable shop.

**Ok.**

Opposite there, so that was where, what is there now? Just past the Thai restaurant and next to the now Thai restaurant was a Dutch restaurant.

(35:01)

**Oh wow.**

And that was run by the father and the two (2) sons. And the wife had the little greengrocer shop on the other side. I know that restaurant very well because we went there sometimes and had dinner there. The chemist has always been there [on Haynes Street], that's still the same, but next to the chemist where the ABC Shop [used to be], that used to be when I came here, that was Hastings, a dress shop. They had a butcher, instead of the tavern, Stove's butcher, and a bit further on because that was open land, and you had all of a sudden had a little shop again and that was Prunster. There were a lot of delicatessens here, a lot of delis (laughs) because it was a holiday resort at the time. People came here for holidays; that's why my friends had a holiday home here. People from Claremont, they came to Kalamunda for a holiday.

**That's funny isn't it?**

In those days they didn't travel that far, you know. That was already quite a trip.

**Yes I can imagine.**

There was still so much land and there were not many shops between, there were just houses between Underwood and where the ANZ bank is [corner of Haynes Street and Canning Road], there were a few houses there and that was all. So things have-

**Very different.**

Barberry Square didn't exist and the shopping centre, you know, where the markets are now just didn't exist. There were some houses in that street but now is a shopping centre. And Robert Bropho, you know the Aboriginal? He lived there; he didn't look after his house very well. There were two (2) Aboriginal families lived there. And then there was Slatyer was at where the library is now, that was the only land estate agent. Things have changed.

**They have.**

Enormously.



**Yes. So with having a Dutch restaurant here, there must have been, were there quite a few Dutch people in Kalamunda at that time, in the 50s?**

Yes because one Dutch couple I knew they had an anniversary and they had the anniversary at that restaurant and it was a first class restaurant because people from Perth came to the restaurant and especially the Council. The Councillor and his entourage, they came every year and had dinner at that restaurant because they said this is the best restaurant there is, in those days. They did very well but the woman became homesick and she wanted to go back to Holland, so they packed up and left which was a pity.

(40:18)

There was the [Pals] restaurant, you had Thompson on the corner then you had the restaurant and then you had a little, a tiny little shop. It was a jeweller and then there was a bit of an arcade thing, which still is there I think, that arcade. And then our shop came and our shop went from the arcade to the chemist.

**What kind of shop was that?**

Hardware.

**Hardware, that's right.**

Later on Mitre [Mitre 10] and the other one, Bunnings, well you can have too many hardware, because there was another little hardware in Barberry Square as well. Well he finished up too.

**So how did you come to have a hardware shop?**

Well I don't know really. I remarried-

**Ok.**

I remarried in '56, when I lived here I met him; he was a Dutchman and he worked for Musgrove's in Perth but then we had an opportunity to buy the shop because the shop was for sale. He was a TV man, he knew everything in and out of TV and that was very new, nobody knew much about it but he had been into it very deeply. So he bought the hardware and made it a TV shop as well, so it was hardware and TV.

**That must have been popular, everyone buying TV's at that time.**

Yes he was extremely busy, because in those days with those TV's a lot went wrong and they needed attention so he had to go to different houses and see to it and so on. It was totally different to now.

**So I guess the Kalamunda Hotel would have been there?**

Yes that was there.

**Were there any other shops around where the hotel was or was it mainly in Haynes Street?**

The fish and chips shop was always there. The drive in was not there, you know now you can drive in, that was all from later. The hotel was there and of course the Post Office. The Post Office was next to the Hotel. I lived in Lyndhurst Road, when I married I lived in Railway Road opposite the tennis court. So I walked to the Post

Office, you know it was only a little walk to the Post Office. That has all changed too because now there is Coles and all that. That was the Post Office where the car park is, that was the Post Office.

**Was there lots of bush around in Kalamunda then?**

Yes.

(45:05)

**Ok.**

Yes, especially because then I moved to, oh that was before. I lived in Canning Road, opposite the Roads Board, that was before I married, before I married Arthur. I lived in Canning Road and well you had the Roads Board, which is now the Dome, next to there was a laundry where you could bring your washing and all that. It was run by a Polish woman. She married a Dutch baker, he brought bread around and, oh that was later on because before that where this new shop is, Auto-

**Auto One?**

Yes between there and the bank, the ANZ, there was a lot of land, Barberry Square was all land. There was one house and it was a bakery, it was Portwine. I remember going from where I lived in Canning Road early in the morning across the road, went over to the bakery and bought bread, freshly made. Oh that was lovely (laughs). When I lived in Lyndhurst Road the bread was always, they came around with horse and cart, Portwine's son and he was a character. He had a horse and cart and that's the way he brought the bread around. That's how we got it in Lyndhurst Road. I got the milk from over the road because they had cows, because over the road was only one house and the rest was all paddock and cows were there. They were in front of my house,

**It's hard to imagine.**

And every night I went over the road and bought milk fresh from the cow (laughs).

**That's amazing.**

Amazing isn't it?

**It is.**

It was yum. I never had to go out for bread, I never had to go out for milk except the bread was brought to the house and the milk was just over the road. I could get it fresh, you can't get it any fresher.

**No you can't. What about groceries, were they delivered as well?**

Groceries, yes you had to go into Kalamunda. I did it on the bike, I took my Dutch bicycle with me (laughs). I went to school on my bike, but vegetables I never had to go to a green grocer except I lived in Lyndhurst Road and Lyndhurst Road goes like that and that (shows the road layout) and I was here. And in Lyndhurst Road on that side that was all orchards, there was a house on the corner with a swimming pool, that was the only swimming pool in Kalamunda. Behind there it was all orchards and the orchard belonged to the man who had a little shop on the corner of Cotherstone Road and Canning Road and that's where he sold vegetables and fruit.

(50:09)

He told me, because he realised where I lived, he said 'look don't come along the road when you come to my shop' he said 'come in through the orchard'. So I just cut across from my place through the orchard to his shop. Now it's all houses.

**It is.**

It was all open, that's where I got my vegies. So I didn't have to go often into Kalamunda except for some groceries.

**Made it very easy. What did you do in your spare time for entertainment?**

In my spare time.

**Did you have any spare time?**

I often went to Claremont when I had spare time, with Luukje, we spent time there because I didn't have a car I had to do everything by bus. I went into Perth maybe once a month, spent some time; it was usually a Saturday because during the week I worked. In holidays and so on I went to Claremont and sometimes I went to different places. I went to a farm, I was invited by friends to go to a farm in Wannamal and all those kind of things that happened. So entertainment, there was no TV, had a radio and there was an open air theatre in Kalamunda.

**Where was that?**

Where was that again? In the road where the school is,

**Heath Road.**

Heath. Behind IGA, just a few steps behind IGA and then you went in and there was the open air theatre (laughs).

**I guess it's a good spot for it because it's quite slopey there isn't it?**

Yes. That's right that was the open air theatre.

**So what happened in winter? Did they have movies somewhere else?**

No I don't think it was on then. I don't really, I only remember it from summer.

**Ok.**

I can't remember. I don't think it was open in the wintertime because there was a lot of rain, much more than now, in the winter time. That I can't remember anymore, but I think they must have been closed in winter. Yes we went there. Entertainment wasn't like it is now, you know different, different things you did a lot of reading. I read book after book, went to the library all the time.

(55:10)

**Did you go back to Holland after?**

Yes the first time that I went back to Holland was in 1969 and in 1980 [then] I went every five (5) years.

**That's good.**

Which was always lovely (laughs) but I had come to live in Australia and I got so used to the life here I don't think I could live in Holland anymore, too cold (laughs). Maybe too hot here (laughs), but it's a bit too cold there. However I said last week I wish I saw some snow drops falling down because it was so hot and to see some snow falling, it's beautiful (laughs). Sometimes I miss that because the whole world changes when it snows, it's beautiful, absolutely beautiful because the trees; everything looks different but the slush that comes afterwards I don't want that anymore (laughs). No, no I think my children are very happy that they live in Australia that I have chosen to live here.

**That's good.**

And it all turned out for the best, I think I was meant to be here. I don't know why but (laughs) yes.

**Ok well I'll just have a little bit of a look at the other questions. We've covered a lot of questions.**

Yes.

**Which is good. Alright, you mentioned a couple of local identities, you mentioned the lady who had the dress shop and Mr Portwine's son as local identities.**

Oh the identities.

**What made Mr Portwine's son an identity in Kalamunda?**

Well I remember Mrs Wood because (laughs) she always stood outside the shop (laughs) and she held everybody up (laughs). She was quite a nice lady but she was, it was funny. And then there was Pat Hallahan, he's still alive. He used to work in the IGA for a while. I don't know what happened to him, he was quite a character. But otherwise, Ken Dunn was an identity, I think he became Councillor, Ken Dunn the one who ran the delicatessen up where the Dream or whatever its' called [Dreams]. Otherwise special I don't know. No I couldn't tell.

**You mentioned Portwine's son was-**

Oh Lyle he was quite a character, (laughs) he was on his horse. Later on he had a wine shop in Karragullen, no that's taken over by somebody else now, but he went to Karragullen.

(1:00:02)

He was quite a character, he was a loudmouth I think. One day it was very hot, unbearably hot and I was inside the house in Lyndhurst Road and all of a sudden there was a knock on the door and it was Portwine. He said 'do you know the tree is on fire?', I said 'what?' and so he reigned his horse in and he was there and he [used] buckets of water and he attended to the tree. He was very good, how that tree got, it was just a gum tree that stood in the garden by itself and it caught aflame. We think there must have been some glass down the bottom because of the heat of the day, that the light you know started the fire.

**That's a bit scary.**

Yes that was very scary. It was only in that tree and thank goodness the tree stood by itself. Then I realised how dangerous it is with fires in a dry country. That's what I remember of Portwine. The way he talked, you know, he was quite funny but likeable, like you had that woman. You must have seen her, several years ago there was a woman with white hair and she walked the streets of Kalamunda. Did you-

**I don't remember.**

Don't you? I don't know what her name is but that was about ten (10) years [or longer] ago I think and wherever you went, I went for instance to Hastings and she walked past. And then I would go to the bank and she was there, she was everywhere where you walked. It was unbelievable she was always walking; walking, walking. I think she was not quite, she didn't have it altogether and she was always walking. She had this white hair, strange woman. I don't know what her name was but wherever you went you saw her. And never inside a shop, but always outside the shop; most peculiar. And then suddenly she disappeared. So I don't know who that was but otherwise people here just went about their business. They were very friendly, I know when I went into Kalamunda and did shopping it took me hours to get home again because I always met people that wanted to talk to you and really it was lovely when you think about it. Now I hardly know anybody anymore, but in those days I knew everybody, everybody that lived in Kalamunda, I knew them. That's come through the school of course and the parents but yes. I belong to Inner Wheel that was one of the questions.

(1:05:07)

**Yes, that's right the community groups.**

My husband was a Rotarian and we did a lot of community work through Inner Wheel. I've been very involved with that until a couple of years ago when I resigned. I was getting too old (laughs).

**Was the community work that you did in Kalamunda?**

Yes.

**What kinds of things did you do?**

Well we had meetings, the very first thing, we bought lights for a rest home. That was in behind Cotherstone Road, there were houses that were specifically, there was a row of houses and they were specifically for retired people, you know elderly. We bought lamps for them because they often needed a lamp in those days, the light turned off and then they sat in the dark. So we got money and we did raising money, you know like we do for a church raising money, and with the first lot we did that for the elderly. Then we did the blood bank, we went there and attended to that and I don't know who does that now. People with donor blood, that was once a year or twice a year the Red Cross comes, we used to do that. We used to provide them with food, yes all kinds of things. I can't think (laughs).

**That's alright.**

But you know we helped around people that see good and needed it.

**Were there any other groups that you were involved with?**

No because I was teaching and that involves quite a bit. I was involved in the teaching and that took up all of my time because I was going, before when I was teaching, when Luukje was too small yet; I belonged to the Guild, the Ladies Guild. But then when I was teaching I couldn't go anymore because a lot of things happen during day time and that was the time when I wasn't available. I could only do things at night and that was with Inner Wheel the meetings were always at night so that I could attend. But anything that was on during the day I could not, so I had to give them up whatever I was doing. When you're teaching you're very involved with a lot of things, sport and goodness knows what (laughs).

**Ok I think this is probably the last question. We're up to the last question I think.**

What was the last question?

(1:10:10)

**So what do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

I love it, I love it because of its trees surrounding, you hear the birds and the whole atmosphere. I would never leave Kalamunda. I could not live in a town anymore; you know where there are lots and lots of people. Here you have freedom, it's very peaceful and yah the whole atmosphere; things have changed a lot. What I loved at the time was knowing everybody, you know that was lovely, when you get older maybe you become more isolated. I don't know because I can't go out much anymore but I love it, you just look out on the trees, fancy living in a town where you look from one house to the other. When I go to Holland and you know you look out of the window and see nothing but houses (laughs). No, the open air the fresh air here, you look over the smoke of, you know when you're on the hill and you look over Perth and sometimes you see all this smog over it. You think hmm that's not very healthy (laughs). I think we live in quite a good spot.

**Do you think the changes that have happened in Kalamunda are good changes or not so good changes perhaps?**

Oh well you have to go with the flow, you have to go with the times isn't it. I think it's alright it's the way it goes. I don't think you can stop it and that wouldn't be good to stop it anyway. Well more and more houses are being built and it's just about built out now (laughs).

**It does seem like that.**

Only the blocks are still bigger but yes there's still a lot of trees and open air. It's lovely and all my family live all in the hills. They've all chosen to live in the hills, except for one, lives in Scarborough (laughs) but that was because of her husband. But all the kids, when the kids come they love it, they love being here because there's so much to run around in, there's so much space. It's lovely.

**Is there anything else that you wanted to say, that we've missed?**

No, I think. Is that all you want to know?

**I think so; you've told me a lot of information.**

I think I've told you a lot.

**You have it's been great. Alright then, I'll finish up the interview and thank you very much for your time and your memories.**

It was a pleasure.

**Thank you.**

Interview ends 1 hour 14 minutes 37 seconds

**Oral History interview**

**Carol Kerr**

**Interview date: 4 June 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011 Alethea du Boulay interviewing Carol Kerr for Curtin University thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**Carol, we'll just start with your name and your birth date please.**

It's Carol Kerr. It used to be Honnor, the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1955.

**Excellent. And can you tell me a little bit about your family, your parents what were their names?**

There was Max Honnor and Ivy. Do you want mum's maiden name?

**Yep, that would be good.**

Ashton; and I've got two (2) sisters and a brother which was Gail, Susan and Max.

**Great. Were you born in Kalamunda?**

Not technically in Kalamunda because there wasn't a hospital but Subiaco, yes, and then I grew up in Kalamunda.

**So where did your parents live in Kalamunda? Did they grow up in Kalamunda?**

When they got married they lived at 37 Cotherstone Road in Kalamunda and mum, she was an orphan that came out from England and was sent to Fairbridge Farm. When she turned fifteen (15) or sixteen (16), I think it was, she was sent up to Kalamunda as a housemaid for, oh, I can't remember their name. I'll think of that in a minute. Dad lived out at Mundaring Weir Road with his mum and stepfather. Oh, and then my grandfather, my dad's real dad, he lived in Orange Valley Road.

**So your parents met in Kalamunda?**

Yeah, at a dance they had in an old hall in, I think it was Bickley. I know where it was but I think it's sort of more Bickley than anywhere else. I don't think it's there anymore though.

**So growing up in Kalamunda, what are your earliest memories of Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

I think I was lucky, although at that stage I probably didn't realise it. It was a long way from anywhere but it was beautiful because it was just right in the country and I loved animals so you sort of, they were all there. We used to ride our bikes, catch taddies and it was just really good fun (laughs). Probably the earliest thing I remember is on a Saturday morning it was my job to walk up to Kalamunda and pay for the milkman deliveries and the meat delivery and the groceries delivery. That was my job.

**Could you describe your schooling for me, please?**

I just went to Kalamunda Primary. I'm not really sure?

**Any memorable teachers or events that happened while you were at school?**

Yes, we used to have the milk delivered, and that's a horrid memory (laughs). It used to go off because by the time we got to it at morning playtime it'd be yukky and I used to be sick. But we used to do sewing in class. Memorable teachers? Not really (laughs) (phone rings). [Break in recording] I have just remembered a teacher, Mrs Walsh. She was, I think I had her from Grade 1 to Grade 3 and I bumped into her up at the Kalamunda Markets about a year ago. That was good. Oh, actually no, the more you think about it the more, yes there is. Mr Earl, that was his name, he was my Grade 6 and 7 teacher, I think, but that's about it. I wasn't that good at school (laughs).

**Were you good at sports? Anything in particular?**

Yeah; I was very good at running. I apparently held the champion runner of Kalamunda High for ten (10) years after I left but I don't know. That was what I was told; I don't know if it was true but anyway.

**So you went on to Kalamunda High after primary school?**

Yes, I did. And then that was it. Then I went out to work.

**What did you do for work?**

There was a little Orange Valley store just between the high school and home and I used to work there for Mr and Mrs Miller. And then they sold it to Mrs Bishop who's [son] Steel Bishop, you'd know him from Kalamunda, cycling champion, world champion. I worked for his parents and in those days I got married fairly early and had children.

**Ok. I guess we'll talk about your family then. Who did you marry and when did you get married?**

I met my first husband at Kalamunda Swimming Pool and we just had a civil marriage and I had two (2) children to him. That was Luke and Peter. Then, how much do you need?

(5:19)

**As much as you want to tell me, that's fine.**

And then that split up. I met my second husband in Perth and I had another two (2) children to him and that was Samantha and Benjamin. Now they're all grown up and I've got grandchildren (laughs).

**Great. We'll talk a little bit about what you and your family did in your spare time growing up; back in time again.**

Yep. Back in time is fabulous. I had to think about it and I thought, oh, in those days you didn't really do much we didn't have a lot of money. We used to really make our own fun and that included riding our bikes all round Orange Valley Road which was quite a trek; and I do remember when we were thirsty on hot summer days drinking out of puddles on the side of the road. We used to just go tadpoling and Sunday drives sometimes. We never went too far. And dad trying to teach mum to drive was fun cos we always sat in the back and go, 'no, no, no. Don't teach mum'. We went mushrooming and, oh, went and spent some time with nanna. That was good because dad was always helping on the orchard down there. Oh, we used to go gilging. That was funny when I bit my sister (laughs). Yeah; we didn't really, that was

all we really did. Sunday nights was a roast night. We all used to sit there and watch Young Talent Time or something like that and mum'd bring out her little, they used to cost twenty cent (20c) bag of lollies but it fed all of us for a Sunday night treat. Treasure trove it was.

**So there wasn't any planned entertainment in Kalamunda, movies or anything like that?**

No movies. No; mainly just family get togethers for birthdays and things. Mum and dad weren't really into much of a social scene so, yeah. No, they just worked so hard around the property.

**What about friends growing up? Did you do stuff with friends, hang out with friends?**

Some I can tell you, some I won't (laughs). I used to go horse riding with Dianne Lucas; that was good fun. That was in my later years. My best friend at primary school was Rosemary Miller. She's still up in Kalamunda somewhere. I think she's a teacher now. She left primary school and ended up going to St Brigid's so the friendship sort of drifted apart. What else did I do? No; not really a lot. I got a bit of part-time work as I got older with the Miller's and I'd worked for ChiChi Boutique for a little while but Kalamunda was totally different then.

**So how has Kalamunda changed?**

I remember there was a road that went past the fire station. I can't think of the name of the road but it now goes through to well, it used to go through to Mead Street from Canning Road, Central Avenue [Road] I think, and that was continually through. There was no Coles, there was vacant blocks in the main street; there was the Kookaburra Tavern. We used to ride our horse up the main street (laughs). Well I do remember dad used to go to the hotel on a Friday night, I think, obviously pay night, and we'd sit out the front cos you weren't allowed in and we used to just play there with my siblings. That was good fun. Be a bit cheeky I suppose, but it was good fun (laughs). After talking to you it made me really stop and think about the post office that used to be up where Coles is now. It used to be a free standing building; yeah, it was just totally different. The feel of it was different too, it was very cottagey, yeah, it was lovely. Everybody sort of knew each other but at times that wasn't so good (laughs) because you'd get dobbed on as you were a bit older. But no, we had fun, it was good fun.

**In terms of the shops I guess, it'll come under, you mentioned the Kookaburra Tavern. Any other shops you went to?**

Yeah; the Kookaburra was a café and that was flash.  
(10:04)

I mean the Kookaburra wasn't flash but for Kalamunda in those days that was quite something. Yeah; they just did milkshakes and things like that. There was Underwood's, they had a general store. Stove's, Milton Stove had Stove's Butchers. He was lovely cos with my running, every time I used to win a race I'd go up and see him and he'd send his apprentice across the road to get me a large bottle of coke. That was a big thing in those days, that was I think it was twenty cents (20c) or something but it was a big thing and it really made me special; and that's from a butcher (laughs). So that was really lovely. What else was there? There was Underwood's Store; that's where they used to go to. Kim Johnson of course, he's still there and his son's taken over, Brett. When I was little I used to run everywhere

in bare feet and Kim used to call me the only white boong in captivity (laughs) but I didn't mind. That's probably all I can remember at the moment.

**Ok. Who were some of the local identities in the area?**

To me?

**Yes.**

Milton Stove, the Doubicans, they were very popular. Mrs Doubican used to take in children that had nowhere else to go. I didn't know a lot about it but I just knew that happened. Local identities? Kim Johnson, he was a big thing but maybe that was just me. Oh, I can't really think of any, just the shop owners 'cos I mean that was really all I did.

**And you got to know them through working in the shops?**

Yeah, not really working with them 'cos I worked just at Orange Valley Store then got married. Yeah; no I'm sorry I can't think of anybody else. Oh, there was the Halse's. They worked at, oh, what would you call it? Oh, I can't remember what the name of it was but all the orchards used to take their fruit there and the Halse's, I don't think they owned it but they worked for the man who owned it and dad used to take all fruit and stuff there, and then they would go to market from there. That's probably about it. It might pop up a bit later.

**That's alright. Any other memories of Kalamunda or the surrounding areas?**

No, not that I can think of at the moment. Let me have a look at my little notes, what else have I got. Oh yeah; Kostera's Garage. That was another one that was up there and now that's, you know, that's Stuart Kostera but it was his mum and dad and I remember dad talking about the War and having to go in. I don't ever remember Mr Kostera but I remember Mrs Kostera. When dad had his motorcycle he used to apparently be a bit of a ratbag and they could hear it coming from all up the hill apparently. Dad used to go there and buy petrol with coupons which was quite fascinating cos, I mean, we wouldn't understand that. What else was there? Let me see. No; that's about all I can think of.

**Was the train line still in operation when you were growing up?**

No; no. Mum I think went on it but I don't remember it at all.

**So with it not being in operation, what were the station buildings and were they used for anything else or was the land just vacant in that area?**

I just remember the zig zag. I don't think I ever saw the trains. The station, I think, was just up near where the St John Ambulance is now. That is as much as I can remember on that. I don't think, no, I don't think it ever went when I was alive.

**Have you been involved in any community groups or any organisations, local organisations?**

Not my mum and dad but my aunty, Aunty Peg, her husband was George Honnor.  
(15:08)

I think they were involved in a few things but Aunty Peg's daughter Wendy Weir she was. She was quite good with the tennis club, Kalamunda Tennis Club, and she still

plays tennis for Western Australia. She went to, it wasn't Dubai because it wasn't there, (background noise) she went somewhere over in the east; not Eastern States, eastern countries and represented WA, I think it was. Nanna, I believe my grandmother used to be a cook at the Kalamunda Hotel. Definitely her mum was, I think cos I've actually got a family Bible that was marked to Miss Stoneham and that was from the Kalamunda Hotel, I think. So that's really not a social club but still.

**Well in some ways it is I guess, a meeting place.**

Well it was I suppose, in those days. That's why dad used to go up on a Friday night.

**I've just remembered something. Were there boarding houses still around when you were growing up? I've had people mention them before.**

I don't, look I have heard of them since but I don't remember any. My Aunt Lucy, she used to live on I think it was number 1 Mundaring Road, she used to take in boarders but I don't think it was like a boarding house. But I do believe there were quite a few up there I wasn't aware of.

**Ok.**

I can't know everything. (laughter)

**That was good just to know what you remember and how it's changed. Ok well that's the last of my questions. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

Peaceful. It's different now than what it was because it was very close knit. Oh, it's very pretty I just love it and when I retire I'll probably go up there too. Back up there when I can part with this. But yeah; it's just a good place. It was a terrific place to grow up and it's a shame the kids don't get the same opportunities now to do what we did, it was a good time.

**Ok. Have you got anything else you wanted to add to the interview?**

I don't think so, love. No. Probably I forgot to mention that my grandfather was a wood chopper and he was Harry Honnor. He used to have a little truck that used to go and deliver everybody's wood. He's still got the Kalamunda number plates; yeah, number twelve (12). Well he hasn't because obviously he's passed away but Wendy has. Yeah; no not really love. It was just a good place to grow up. You know you just went for your bike rides and you were safe. You used to leave your houses open and I don't think you'd do that now. No, it was just a wonderful place to grow up.

**Great. Well thank you for your time and your memories.**

I've just remembered something else. When we were kids growing up we'd go out to Paulie's Zoo which is now where the Chalet Rigi used to be and he used to have all these gorgeous little animals. That was really good. That was I think Mr, it was obviously Mr Paulie and I'd say Pauls Valley was named after him. There was some tie up there but I was only a little tiny tacker so I don't remember much. But that was interesting so you should try and find something out about that.

**What kind of animals at that zoo?**

Probably cockies (laughs), kangaroos; maybe some wombats. I don't remember really. It was just a big trip. Well it wasn't a big trip but it was an exciting thing cos I just loved animals. So I'd go and look at anything really (laughs). That is about it I think.

Interview ends 19 minutes 32 seconds

**Oral History interview**

**Paul Lewis**

**Interview date: 24 September 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2011 my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Paul Lewis for my Curtin University thesis project for the role of oral history to interpret a place. So I'll just start with your name and your birth date please Paul.**

My name is Paul Lewis. My birth date is the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1953.

**Thanks. Can you tell me a little bit about your family, just a bit of background information about your parents?**

My parents?

**Yes.**

My parents; actually it's a bit puzzling even to me. I haven't really fully understood my father's side of the family but my mother was born in England in Liverpool. She came to Australia when she was about seventeen (17) and I think she's hated - well, she says she hates it but she says she's hated every moment that she's been here; but we think deep down that she really likes the place but 'cos she was from a strong English background she has to sort of maintain her heritage. My father - I never really worked out where he was born. Actually he was born in Singapore but his parents were, well either Indian or some sort of Eastern European background, so he spent a lot of his early life in India and then he worked in Singapore for a long time as well, I think. He had about three (3) or four (4) brothers and a sister and his mother died when he was quite young. Also my mother, her father was English but her mother was Russian and in all that we have - and my father's Jewish, so we have Russian, we have Jewish, we have English. We have all bits and pieces inside as I say which is good, it's interesting. My father never spoke a lot about his history, his life. He didn't have a very happy life as far as we know and then he came, he met my mother in Singapore during the Second World War. It was sort of love at first sight on his part. I don't think it was necessarily on my mother's part and her father was opposed - 'cos her father worked for a shipping company and he worked out of Singapore, and he was opposed to my father marrying my mother. I don't think he thought my father was good enough for my mother. They eventually came, they settled in Australia, they went to Sydney and he joined an uncle there of his in the jewellery business and then my father - no, my grandfather on my mother's side had been to Perth and her, my mother's mother, lived in Perth and they eventually settled in Perth just before the War, I think, and we've been here ever since. And then she had five (5) boys and a daughter and we all grew up in and around Perth and the suburbs.

**Excellent. And your parents' names?**

My mother's name was Audrey and my father's name was Samuel.

**Great. And your siblings? Can you give me a little bit more information?**

Okay. I have four (4) brothers. My eldest is Peter; he'd be in his sixties (60s) now. He's married with four (4) children; he's an accountant. My second brother is Chris. He's married with two (2) daughters; he's retired; he's in his early sixties (60s). He retired in about his mid-fifties (50s). He worked in the Post Office all of his life, for about forty three (43) years I think. A lot of that time was spent; probably about half that time was spent in Kalamunda. He has two (2) daughters; his wife was a teacher and now he's retired and spends his time playing golf and looking after his five (5) grandchildren. My next brother is Michael. He's worked for the Education



Department and he has two (2) daughters. He's in his – he's just turned sixty (60). Then there's my sister, she's, Michael's in his early sixties (60s), my sister I think has just turned sixty (60). She has two (2) children - a boy and a girl. She's a teacher's aide in Parkerville and Darlington. Then there's my youngest brother John. He works in the Post Office and he just got married recently and he's, I think he's in his early fifties (50s); so all getting on in years (laughs). My mother had five (5) boys; six (6) children in the space of about I suppose. She had three (3) kids under about six (6) and then every couple of years there's another one. Then she had the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>), another girl, but she died I think a few days after she was born so that was a long, long time ago; so six (6) children. Big family in those days.

(5:10)

We lived, well, we lived in Dianella in Perth and then we moved up into the hills in the, it would've been, I was born in '53, so we would've moved up about '55, 1955 moved up to Lesmurdie and the next thirty (30) or forty (40) years we spent our time between Lesmurdie and Kalamunda, going back and forth.

**Okay. So what are your earliest memories about Kalamunda, or Lesmurdie?**

Well, I was only two (2) when I moved, and we lived in just a little house opposite what's it called, St Brigid's Primary, St Brigid's Girls' School, and there was a church. It was just Our Lady of Lourdes Church which had just been established and my parents and a few others, it was just a small community; and they were all involved in setting the church up, building the church, running it, organising things. The Church used to be in St Brigid's Convent and we used to go to a tiny little church in there, then just a small parish and then it got bigger and bigger. There used to be one shop in Lesmurdie which was just the local deli but the only shop in Lesmurdie I think. Then when I was about eleven (11) we moved to our first house in Kalamunda; so that was the start of my Kalamunda life. So do you want me to just to keep talking about that?

**Yes.**

We lived where the Kalamunda, just where the Kalamunda Swimming pool is now we lived about five hundred (500) metres before that and there was just nothing there. There were just a few houses and we had a nice big house and I used to walk to school 'cos you didn't have; you did have school buses, but we used to walk to school because we used to like it. Sometimes we'd catch the bus. It was about a mile, a couple of miles to school and we used to go to Mary's Mount Primary School. The treat was in the afternoon, when we'd walk home, there'd be a fish and chip shop at the bottom of the main street in Kalamunda and we'd go there and buy icy poles, and ice-creams, and chips and have a little feast, then we'd walk home. So I spent all my primary school at Mary's Mount Primary School and Kalamunda at that stage it was just a place with about seven (7) or eight (8) shops: the local butcher, baker, deli, grocery, post office and just few other little shops. We didn't do much because there wasn't much to do. I mean there was nothing there. We'd just play amongst ourselves or with our school friends. We'd go to each other's houses; we'd go and play there. There was a local quarry down in Kalamunda that we used to go and play in. Yeah, that's about, what else?

When we did catch the bus it used to be at the top of where the Kalamunda Museum is now, or the Kalamunda History Village, and there used to be a whole lot of pine trees that used to be there and we used to climb them in the morning before we'd catch the bus. You know, we'd be climbing the trees while waiting for the bus. They've now unfortunately, I think they've taken a lot of those pine trees down. And what's there now, like the History Village and all that and the library, there was

actually nothing there. It was just the old Kalamunda train station that used to be there, but wasn't in use because when we came to Kalamunda the trains weren't running, the trains had finished. So I never had any, we never had any access to trains or train rides to Perth and things like that because Perth was a place; that was just this big place a long way away and 'cos you were young you never used to go there. I never remember going to Perth at all in my, primary school days. It would always be just stuck at Kalamunda; hung around Kalamunda.

**So other than the fish and chip shop do you remember going to any other shops?**

Yeah; well, there was the guy called, it was called Underwood's, that was a grocery store, like a deli as well and a grocery store and Mr Underwood used to look after that; and you'd just go in there and buy the local whatever, lollies or your food stuff, your groceries and things like that.

(10:10)

And then across the road there was a butcher called Stove's run by a gentleman called Milton Stove, so he ran that and then there was another deli, veggie place, ice-cream place called, well, it was run by people called Prunster's. They lived in Lesmurdie but they had their shop in Kalamunda, Leo Prunster was his name. He used to run that and they used to be part of the Church as well 'cos they were good Catholics, then next to him. Kalamunda as a main street only had quite a very few shops. It had a few down the bottom of the street: there was the fish and chip shop, there was another little deli, there was, I think there was a hardware store there and there used to be the old Kalamunda Tennis Club which I always wanted to play there but I never got round to it because by the time I was old enough to play there it moved somewhere else. It moved down to the bowling club and I never even got to play there either. I didn't take much interest in tennis until probably after I left school probably seventeen (17), eighteen (18), then I played tennis. The other shops there, there was a clothes shop Hastings and there was a Four Square store right at the corner on the top of Haynes Street and across the road from that there was. There was one shop where my father used to work. I think it was a jewellery store as well he used to work - he worked in before it closed down and next to him I think - . I can't remember. It might've been a shoe store but then where the Kalamunda Pub; I think the Kalamunda Pub was always there and then along that street there were a few other shops. The main shops were a shoe shop run by Dick Hawley. The good thing about Kalamunda in those days is that you knew everybody and everybody knew you, so a few shops, and you'd always be interacting with people 'cos you'd be walking around all the time and you'd buy all your food and all your shoes and clothes, everything there. Then the pub there was another shop, there was a real estate agent called Ken Dunn who my father used to work for. Ken Dunn was actually a politician, ended up being a politician, member for Darling Range. And the good thing about him I used to wash his car. Every couple of weeks I'd go round and wash his car. I think he'd give me fifty (50) cents or I think it was five (5) shillings in those days and that was not a lot of money; so that's how I used to get my pocket money, washing cars. There was the Post Office of course and there was the TAB where Coles, in the main street where Coles Kalamunda is now; and as I say, Mr Dixon. We used to live in Kalamunda, again, basically where Coles is now and there used to be a shop there. Mr Dixon used to run little, not toy trains, but little trains that you could take to circuses and go for a train ride around there. He used to have a big house there and a shop on the corner; and right opposite him there used to be the bakery, Clark's Bakery.

So there were about, you know, a dozen shops just around, but there weren't a lot of kids around in those days, it was just guys, friends from school and they never or didn't necessarily live close by because they were boarders at Mary's Mount and

they were your day boys and they'd come from all over the place. So I just had three (3) or four (4) friends who we used to, you know, go to each other's houses and you know play; or I'd play by myself in the back yard. I'd play cricket, just pretend I was a famous cricketer and sort of play against the fence. Yeah; there was, until I got older, probably went to high school then I started playing sport, more sport like your rugby and your cricket so you played those on the weekend; you'd represent your school and then later on. And because you were too young to take the licence, you'd stay home and then once you got your licence well then your life just changed completely. Still not a lot, because Perth was still a long way away and the big social scene hadn't really started then 'cos that would've been the late 60s, so our entertainment then was, we used to have local dances up in the main hall in Kalamunda, called the Agricultural Hall, and we used to watch movies there as well. They'd have movie nights and there'd be concerts but that's about all. Yeah; it was just like dances or films. I don't remember much. And then sport, sport played a big part of your life in those days and then you played footy in winter and then you played cricket and basketball in summer.

(15:31)

**Were there lots of, I guess, followings of the town team, the Kalamunda team, when they played at home? Would there be lots, a big crowd there?**

No. You'd get no people (laughs). You'd get no people. Just the parents, a few parents would watch.

**Oh, okay.**

When I was in high school we joined, there was a club called Cats Basketball Club. You used to have two (2) basketball courts that used to be in Kalamunda next to the oval where the cricket club and the footy club so we used to play; I think it was Friday night. So basketball was a big scene, a big social scene and you'd get together. All the girls'd be there and all the guys'd be there so you you'd be mixing with the guys and the girls and we joined a big club. It was joined from some of the kids from school, they actually formed the club; it was called Cats Basketball Club. It was formed by a guy called, it was an American guy called Michael Moore and he had a big influence on basketball, him and a few other guys and a guy called John Suckling who used to work, teach at Kalamunda High School. He was the sports master there and a lady called Miss Mullins; she was the sports mistress and they formed this club, basketball club, and it was very big, huge.

A lot of people joined, kids from school joined that and we'd play on Friday nights. I think the girls played Monday nights and the boys played Friday nights; so that was it. We'd go and play basketball on Friday nights and watch basketball on Monday nights and get involved with that. So that was pretty big. Then afterwards when were a bit older, 18 (eighteen), after basketball we'd go back to the pub that was called The Last Drop in Kalamunda. We'd go back there and have a few drinks and that was it; and then your social networks formed from there. And then we started going out more to nightclubs and pictures in town and then also I was involved in a group that was called the YCW. It was called the Young Christian Workers which was sort of a Catholic youth group. The kids, you know from say seventeen (17) to thirty (30), so we joined that and we had meetings at a place called Marion Lodge which was a little, a meeting place, a retreat place where young kids. It was just past where Woolworth's is [on Canning Road]. It was sort of on the border of Kalamunda and Lesmurdie so it was quite easy access. So we'd go there and we'd have meetings there and from there we'd go to other venues. We'd go to other clubs, we'd go to – we might go for picnics, we might go dancing, movie nights. It was just a good social

scene for people in that age group and sort of respectable and that sort of thing. Yeah; that was that.

**So really when you say about Perth being like a faraway place and you didn't go there, you didn't really need to go there necessarily because everything was in Kalamunda?**

Well, we probably didn't know any better. I mean it wasn't like the social scene today where you just gotta go to Perth, it's all happening there, there's so much to do and so many things to see. It's like; today kids have gotta have so many different things to keep them occupied. Back in those days we could amuse ourselves by just doing simple things and that's what we did; so we didn't need to have all that sort of life but once we all got our licenses then we'd get girlfriends and then we'd go out. Then you started to think, well Perth is, there's more to do now, there's more to see down in Perth, and then we said, 'well, Kalamunda, there's nothing to do in Kalamunda', because it was just the dances and your sports so you'd think, well, you want to get away and have a bit more of a life so you'd go and socialise more by going down; by going to your nightclubs and those sorts of places. And tenpin bowling and ice skating. But they were all down in the City so you had to get away from Kalamunda because there wasn't enough there to really fulfill your social needs so you had to go other places and Perth was the place to go.

**I've just had a thought then. You mentioned about the swimming pool not being there when you first came. Was it a big thing when it was built? Were you living in Kalamunda then?**

Kalamunda was still a small town. I mean it was actually built, just as we moved to Kalamunda, it was actually being built so that would've been probably about I think it would've been '64, perhaps, '65.

(20:13)

It'd be around there it was being built and because I wasn't really a swimmer, it didn't have any appeal to me a lot. I mean it was good to have but I was never a swimmer. I can't remember whether it was really big. I know the high school would've used it for swimming and Gooseberry Hill and Kalamunda and all those outlying suburbs, they were still small and it was a long distance to come but I would assume it would've been fairly popular because otherwise I don't think they would've built it or they must've thought; there must've been a need for it so they built it. I used to go, I mean even though I wasn't a great swimmer, I mean that was another place where you could meet, you know, after school or on the weekends; so you'd go and meet there. And later on it was after I left there I think they got those water slides there so, yeah; but they were never part of my life, the water slides, it was mainly the swimming pool.

Before it was built there was a gravel road that used to go behind it and I used to walk from my house to Kalamunda along the back street and one day I walked along there and there was a snake running across. I just about shat myself because I'd never seen a snake before, but it was only a small snake and I ran and I just looked behind and I thought it was actually chasing me but it was actually running somewhere else 'cos it was probably just as scared; but that was my only experience I think of seeing a snake in those days. And then in those days we used to, on the weekends, my brothers and I we'd go out into the bush and collect wood and we'd chop wood for the fire, all of my brothers. We'd get the axe and the saw and we'd go and chop wood. That was part of our entertainment I suppose. My father, we had a little chook run there so we used to breed chooks for a while. I mean, I suppose it must've been, well, it would've been more than an acre, it's hard

to say but it's quite a big property. Yeah, we had a long driveway that used to stretch down to Canning Road and there'd be all these Oleander trees all along the driveway and there'd be a big vacant patch of land in front, a big house at the back. I remember (laughs) we used to have the old coppers for doing the washing. You had the old washing machine where you have to put the clothes through a rinser to get all the water out and you'd have to boil all the hot water in this great big copper. I remember my mum, you know, spending hours in the laundry doing the washing 'cos that was the way you did it in those days, those old crappy machines that they used to have. But I mean it was a good life; I don't ever remember ever being unhappy or sad but we never did a lot. I mean my father was going from job to job and my mother was bringing up six (6) children. I don't remember us ever going on holidays anywhere, we could never afford to and we never had a big enough car. I know we used to have a little Volkswagen. I don't know if you can remember the old Volkswagens, there used to be two (2) front seats, there'd be a back seat and there'd be a little, like a cubby at the back, a little; it was about that long (shows size) and about that wide (shows size) and my younger brother and I used to sit in that 'cos we didn't have any room to sit anywhere else; and we used to get carted around in that. It was mainly spent, you'd go and visit, my parents friends on the weekends and they might live in Kenwick or, I don't know, somewhere along in Gnangara, places like that. Those places were so far away, they just seemed miles away so it was a whole day outing that you'd go there. So those were sort of the highlights, just seeing your parents' friends and maybe their kids.

There wasn't anything like computers or even radios or DVDs or iPods, those things just weren't around. I mean record players, I think we used to have one of those wind up record players where you put the records on this thing and played tunes on that. Then I think we got a television set and then, you know, you started to watch TV; so at night time you were watching television. And television was probably a big part of your life in those days because there was nothing else.

**Okay. I just have a question going back to your schooling days. You mentioned about going to Mary's Mount. Were there any memorable teachers or memorable things that happened at school?**

(25:14)

Yes, well it was a boys' school but they used to allow a few girls in there, so it was run by the nun's. It was called Sisters of St Joseph and my first teacher was called Sister Margaret Mary and she was just gorgeous. She was a real lovely, lovely, lovely nun and then my second teacher was Sister Davilia and she was really nice. Then there was another old grumpy one called Sister -, I can't remember her name. Sister Vieni was nice, there was another one I didn't like and then there was a Mother Lawrence who used to belt you over the knuckles with a ruler and then my probably favorite one was my Year 6, 7 teacher, Sister Anastasia; she taught us. I mean in those days you only had small classes and I think in Year 7 we only had about, I think there was only seven (7) kids, seven (7) kids and I think three (3) of those were boarders and four (4) of them were just day boys. One day she got us all together and said, 'now I'm going to tell you about the birds and the bees'. She told us this story and it had nothing to do with (laughs) the birds and the bees and we were so naïve we had no idea anyway, so that was crazy. Then we had a lay teacher who was our Art and Craft teacher, Mrs Portwine and she was really nice. She used to teach us art and crafts; so, yeah. Sister Elizabeth she was another, I always remember her because she always used to have red cheeks. She used to teach in higher -. I spent all my primary school at Mary's Mount and then later on in life I actually went and worked there, I got a job there as a grounds man and gardener and caretaker. So I lived in the actual where the old laundry used to be,

they converted it into a little house so I used to live in that; so that was great. I ended up getting married there and then unfortunately they; it was an old school built in, I think it was built in the '20s and by this I worked there in the '80s and '90s and it was getting old and decrepit so they decided to pull it down and build a new school and it lost all its character, because it had beautiful big gardens; and old buildings and the boarders used to stay there and they used to have these upstairs, the boarders used to have these great big baths. Just a big bath all the boarders used to go in. Things changed so much these days. Yeah; it was just amazing. Then on the weekends in primary school they used to have a guy come in and we'd do, I guess it was called calisthenics in those days, like gymnastics; do all sorts of things like that. Then you'd have your sports days which used to be on a Sunday so you'd have to, I remember my father had a little scooter, I mean we didn't have a car so the only way we could get there is he'd ferry us on the scooter. So I'd be on the front and another brother'd be on the back and he'd go back and forth taking us, you know, back to the oval. Yeah, they were the main; Sister Anastasia was probably my main one I remember most. I actually kept in contact with her a bit afterwards. But they were all really nice nuns, really nice, you know.

### **Where did you go for high school?**

High school. Well, I started off, 'cos normally from Mary's Mount you'd go to, it was called De La Salle. It's now called La Salle.

**Oh, yeah.**

I went there but I hated it, I just hated it. It was run by the brothers. I could never get an understanding of algebra and I think geometry; yeah, that sort of thing. After six (6) months there my father got a job up in Geraldton so my younger brother and I, we moved up. All my other siblings they were too old. They'd left school so they didn't come with us. Did my sister come? I can't remember. Maybe my sister came, no; wait a minute. So I moved there and we went to St Pat's College which was the Catholic school there and the great thing about there is that I learnt to swim when I was up there 'cos you'd go to the pool, well, they didn't have a pool, they just had a jetty in Geraldton then, you just had to jump or drown. So you learnt to swim there. I had this little teacher, I can't remember her name, she was really lovely and she taught me algebra so I was able to understand algebra from then.

(30:09)

After six (6) months again my father changed jobs and he came back to Perth and I went to Kalamunda High School for two (2) years and then from the high school, cos that only went to Year 10 then you'd go to Governor Stirling. and I spent, I started Governor Stirling, did a few, I think I did about nine (9) months and then I did not like it so I left and then I went back the following year and did Year 11 again and finished that. Started Year 12, I didn't like it so I left and the following year I went back to Leederville Tech and did my Year 12 there which was great. The only reason I liked Year 11, there were four (4) really gorgeous girls there and I had a big crush on them all though especially one; but other than that, yeah, high school wasn't that, I never liked senior high school. Junior high school was okay; never liked senior high school much and Leederville Tech was fine. I think I was back in Lesmurdie at that stage and I used to catch the bus there every day. That was interesting; that was good.

**So had Kalamunda changed from the time you went up to Geraldton and came back, even though it was a short time?**

Oh, when, no, no. It hadn't changed much at all. It still hadn't changed much. When we came back we lived in the house where my brothers had been living which is across the road from the original house where we used to live. I think we lived there for a few days and then over the next probably six (6) years we moved all around different places. In Kalamunda we moved to a place down Kalamunda Road just, you know where all those massive big houses are in Kalamunda Road? As you go down Kalamunda hill? All these beautiful houses on the right-hand side; all these really old [houses]. Well, we used to live basically opposite. My grandfather used to live there. He was a mean old bastard and he never really helped us out much; but we used to live next to him for a while. And then we moved next to Kalamunda Primary School, a couple of houses along there for a while and then I think after that we moved to Lesmurdie again. I would've been in my twenties (20s) then so school was all over.

I don't think Kalamunda changed until I, I was trying to think, I remember I came back once and said, 'wow this has all changed'. I think it might've been when I went overseas when I was about, well, my second time overseas when I was in my late twenties (20s) so that would've been probably in the 70s, late 70s, went overseas for about a year and a half and came back and Kalamunda had just changed. Coles had been built and the Commonwealth Bank had been built and a few other banks were there. Some of the old shops had gone and places like The Last Drop pub had come in. Yeah, there were just new shops, new people and it was sad because whereas you'd walk up the street then and everybody would know you, now you walk up there twenty (20) years later and you hardly knew anyone. I mean everybody would say, 'hi Paul', or 'hi Barbara', 'hi Dick, Tom or Harry', you'd just know everyone, but after that it just became like a big town and it lost it's, it lost that. Even though there wasn't a lot there because you were young and you grew up with what was there and you learned to appreciate what was there then; when all this new stuff came in it was good but it just wasn't the same. It's just like I used to work at Bunnings when it was just a small, in Midland, when it was just a small traditional store and then once they built a big warehouse you just lose it. You just become, you're just part of the system and you don't know everybody whereas before you knew everybody. It's just cold and dank and not friendly. I mean it's probably still friendly but not the really close friendship you used to have.

**That's interesting.**

And then the Post Office moved to where it is now which is in Barbary Square, so that moved and everything kept changing. Shops that we used to know were there before are gone and the shop owners would die or they'd move out or they'd move on to other places or they'd retire and new shops would come and all the old buildings would go and all these new fandangled buildings would come. Yeah, it was sad but as I say, I've just started working for a company called Bus West now which used to be Kalamunda Bus Service and one of my jobs I'm doing I actually drive through Kalamunda and Gooseberry Hill and Lesmurdie every day and I'm just thinking every time I pass there I'm thinking, 'that shop used to be there and that's all changed and that used to be there', and yeah; it's sad to see it all gone.

(35:26)

In many ways I'd like to go back and live there 'cos it was where I spent most of my life. I'm not sure whether I could handle how it's all changed 'cos I like sort of quiet and a bit of space. Now there's no space there at all, it's all crowded. We move on, progress they say.

**Yeah; sometimes good, sometimes not so good.**

No.

**In terms of the layout of Kalamunda you've talked about the shops already, but I'm just thinking more about Stirk Park. Has that changed much?**

The only thing that's changed, Stirk Park is they've built that sort of like that big amphitheatre type thing, that covering there. They've put a pathway all the way down through it and they put the chess board. I can't say that I really spent any time; I don't remember ever actually going to Stirk Park. It wasn't really; it was just a big field. It wasn't really a family friendly place to go. They didn't redevelop that until a lot later when I was a lot older so when I was younger there was nothing. Mainly we'd go on parish outings, parish picnics, and we'd go out to New Norcia or places like that, so didn't spend a lot of time as a family around Kalamunda really 'cos it wasn't there. It wasn't developed; it was just a big paddock where cows used to be. And I think the bowling club would've been there but even that's changed; that's sort of become more modern now. So, yeah; it was just a place that you'd pass, it was nothing. It wasn't really a park then until a lot later in the, when I used to work at Mary's Mount I used to take my children there and that would've been in '87, about '89 I used to take my children there so that's when we started to use it a lot more. It wasn't 'til then that I ever used it; that was thirty (30) years after I'd gone in Kalamunda.

**Okay, good to know. Now you mentioned a bit of work, so what work did you do after you left school?**

(laughs) This could take hours (laughs). Unfortunately I ended up like my father. I had a lot of jobs, I don't know why, I was just one of those people, I couldn't settle down. I went to uni; I started doing teacher's training. In those days the government would, you'd be bonded to the government. You'd get a three (3) year course and you'd go to, I could've gone to Mt Lawley or Curtin which had just started its teacher training course. I was one of the first people there to do the teacher training course at Curtin (laughs) but I think I liked more; because there were so many gorgeous girls there I spent more time in the coffee shop talking to the girls than actually studying. I hated studying; I was never a good studier. I just liked reading and learning but not actually having to go home and write assignments. I hated writing assignments. So after a year I said, 'no, I can't be bothered doing all this'. So I left that and then I worked, oh, I worked up north for a while. I worked for a mining company up north, I worked in the government in lots of different government departments, whether it was Crown Law, Local Courts, Court of Petty Sessions, Railways and then. I'm trying to think of all these jobs I've had. Gosh. Then I got a job at Mary's Mount Primary School as the gardener/caretaker so I was doing that for about nine (9) years; then we moved to Chidlow and I started studying through Mary's Mount to be a librarian. Of course that was after school and having to go into town to Alexander Library twice a week, I couldn't handle that so after about six (6) months I gave that up as well. I started doing a horticultural course, gave that up as well after about six (6) months and then when I was commuting back and forth from Chidlow it became; oh, no, I was working at Mary's Mount Primary School then a job came up in the library.

(40:04)

They wanted just a person to run the library, not actually teach, but just run the library so I ran the library for three (3) years I think and then 'cos I didn't have a degree I wasn't allowed to go in there anymore. So they gave me a job as a teacher's aide for Year 1 so I was doing that for about nine (9) months and then they said there's no guarantee they could employ me next year 'cos they weren't sure what the numbers were going to be so they said it'd be probably best if I looked



elsewhere for a job. That was in '93 so unfortunately I had to leave Mary's Mount and then I did a few odd jobs here and there; then I joined the Post Office for a couple of years, did night shift. Then my marriage ended up in that period and so after the Post Office I joined Bunnings. I think I might've been unemployed for about a year. I just did odd gardening jobs here and there. Then late '90s I joined the Post Office, no I joined Bunnings. I was in Bunnings, in Midland, for about, I think, three (3) years and I left there and travelled for about six (6) months then I came back and became a bus driver. Worked for Swan Transit for a couple of years, then I went up north again, came back and then I decided to start my own gardening business and that's where I am at now. Doing gardens and I do some bus driving. So, yeah; there were lots of jobs along the way (laughs). I always put down the more jobs you have, the more experience of life you have, so, you know. I mean whereas my brother, my second brother Chris, worked forty three (43) years in the Post Office. I mean I sort of, even though he's built up a good life that way I don't think, he hasn't had the vast range of working with people and different situations that I've had so, I mean there's good points and bad points. That's my work history basically.

**Okay, thank you. Well, you've mentioned your kids, do you want to talk about your own family for a little bit?**

Well, I was married for ten (10) years and then we moved to Chidlow. My wife was heavily into horses and she was a nurse as well. But after ten (10) years, I wasn't really a horse person, so we decided to go our own way but fortunately it was a fairly amicable split and I stayed close, very close. I actually stayed just down the road from my where my wife lives 'cos she kept the house. We had about three (3) and a half acres there so I stayed close to the children and they went to Chidlow Primary and then they went to Eastern Hills. While they were there I got moved to Mundaring. I got a house in Mundaring, a really nice place so I stayed for about nine (9) years. I visit my children, so all that time, and we have shared accommodation so they spend two (2) days with me and their mother. One of them went to WAAPA (Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts) and studied contemporary dance, so she's into that. She does contemporary dance but there's not a big demand for it over in Perth so she's undecided about what she wants to do. She has to work, get another part time job to support herself 'cos there's not enough dance work. She's always applying for grants to try and do dance different places and she's performed at Adelaide, at the Adelaide Festival so she could perform there. She's hoping to perform over in Canberra this year as well. It's just a matter of finding, 'cos there's so few opportunities and so many people looking for it, it's just a matter of luck to be able to get in or name or reputation. She's only been doing it for three (3) years so she's slowly getting there but she'll have to probably go to Melbourne or Asia. She doesn't really want to leave home: she's a bit of a homebody. My eldest daughter's twenty four (24); my youngest daughter is twenty (20). She completed Eastern Hills and she decided to travel so she saved up, she worked for Subway for about a year and a half, and then she travelled for about six (6) months and she's come back, worked for another nine (9) months and now she's travelling; now she's off to South America working and doing some voluntary work over there and she's going to be doing some travelling over there as well. She's in the travel bug which is good, I'm glad she going while she's young 'cos I probably waited too long before I did it. So she'll come back in February and she'll be too undecided. She wants to study but she's not sure so that's a work in progress that one. So they're lovely kids and I've been really lucky. We've had no troubles, no drugs or problems so we've been really lucky with two (2) good kids.

(45:33)

**Going back a little bit to the other section but do you remember some of the local identities of the area?**

I do actually, yeah.

**I should have asked you this earlier.**

Well, I sort of mentioned in passing 'cos they are normally people who just had the shops but there was in the Post Office there was a guy called Bill King. I mean he wasn't the Postmaster, he was just a guy who like spent his whole life basically working in the Post Office, he was there. There was the guy who had the shoe store, Dick Hawley; I mean just guys, they were just icons of that area. There was Kostera's Garage which is, where it is now it's completely different area to where it used to be, it used to be in the main street in Kalamunda. So there was Mrs Kostera, she was an old lady, just used to be there all the time. Every time you'd walk around Kalamunda she was there, she used to run the garage.

**Okay.**

There was a guy called Mr Blythe who used to run the newsagency. We used to live next door to him in Kalamunda. He used to run the newsagency in Kalamunda which is now down the bottom of Haynes Street; he used to run that. He had a wife and two (2) kids. Unfortunately he used to like going to the drag racing, and unfortunately one day a car came round the bend at drag racing and into the crowd and he was killed, and that was very sad. He was still young, he would've been in his forties (40s) probably. His kids would've been very young as well. There was Leo Prunster, who used to have one of the delis there. There was Mr Underwood, he used to run the other store that used to have everything you want, you know, all your groceries, meat and food. And there was Milton Stove who used to run the butcher shop in the main street. There was Mr Hastings; he used to run Hastings Store the clothes store. There was Ken Dunn who was the real estate agent who became a parliamentarian, who my father used to work for. They were the main people in the town. They used to have businesses and so, yeah; they would've been the main ones. The only famous person to come out of the area was a guy I used to go to school with. His name was Steele Bishop. He became a world champion cyclist; he was a world champion cyclist. The other guy I don't know whether he was world famous but he became a big singer. His name was Ron McQueen. His father used to have a newsagency. He used to have the newspaper round in Kalamunda and his son was Ron. He was a big boy and had a big voice but I don't know how famous, I don't know how famous he did become but I think he was quite well known. Yeah; that's probably about it really. They would've been the main people from my youth, younger days that I would've known.

**Okay. It's good to know some names 'cos some of the names I haven't heard from other people's interviews, so that's really good.**

Yeah.

**Other than your parents and your family doing stuff with the Catholic Church in Kalamunda or Lesmurdie, were there any other local groups or organisations that you or your parents were involved in?**

I don't remember my parents being involved in any groups other than the Church. That was it in those days; you really belonged to the Church. You didn't have so many different groups as now. But my brother, my brothers, well Chris, were

involved in like Kalamunda Cricket Club, the Basketball Club, the YCW; 'cos they were just the main areas in those days. It was sporting clubs, you were mainly involved in sporting clubs in those days, you didn't have your volunteer things. So that was the YCW, the Kalamunda Cricket Club, the Kalamunda Basketball Club. Yeah, that's it. That's all I can remember from those days.

(50:19)

It wasn't, like now there's so many groups, organisations that you can join. In those days you weren't aware of them or there wasn't, well, there was probably a need for them but it wasn't put out there as much. You just learned about it by word of mouth whereas now it's advertised and the newspapers are always looking for volunteers but in those days you don't see much of it, there wasn't much of it. There were drama clubs and things like that. I joined the Darlington Drama Club when I was about sixteen (16) but only for about six (6) months. My father wasn't very happy about me; I don't know why he wasn't happy with me being involved in that. It ended up we had a big argument about it and I didn't talk to him for a year (laughs) so that was pretty sad. Yeah, my brothers, we just were a sporting family and my father played bowls and my mother, she wasn't really a sporting person. She did ballet when she was younger but that's about it. Yeah; it was just sport.

**Okay. Now this is the last question. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding areas?**

What now or then?

**Both.**

Then it was just a nice small little country town where it was a place where you'd go out and you had no fear about being bashed even though I suppose there were a few yobbos around but you could keep your cars unlocked; you could keep your houses open; you'd walk around and you'd know everybody and you'd be friendly with everybody. As you get older you realize even though it's just a little country town and there's not a lot there for you to do, as you get older; so your needs weren't, oh, I can't find the word. What you wanted to do, Kalamunda wasn't a place where you could do it, so you had to go out of Kalamunda to do it. So you may tend to think Kalamunda's not the great place that you saw it as when you were younger but then when you go back later you appreciate it, well, it was that nice little country town and it had all these nice little things and all these nice people were there. Now you go back there and it's just like a mini little city. It's vibrant, there's lots of shops, there's lots of people that you've never seen in your life, no-one knows you. There's probably more things to do now. In some respects I still think there's not a lot, the kids have to go to Midland or Galleria or Carousel or Perth to actually, to fulfill what they want. It doesn't really cater for; it still doesn't cater for the younger people. I mean it's got more restaurants now, in my day there was no restaurants there, there was no eating places, you just ate at home all the time. You never went out for dinner 'cos you couldn't afford to. So it's changed, it's good in as much as there's more things to do as you get older. When you're older, probably from the time you're twenty (20) and thirty (30) there's not a lot of things you can do. It used to be a place where old people would come to retire. I mean, it was a retirement place. Now it's a more vibrant place where young people can come and their families can grow up. So I liked it then and I probably I like it now but I think because I spent a lot of my younger life there my memories of then are good and not so much now. Not as good as what they were then. I did say I wouldn't mind going back living there.

**Yeah.**

I'd like to but whether I could stay there I'm not sure. I think I want a more quiet area, like I mean I'd love to go and live down at Albany, try that, 'cos it's away from everything and it's quieter, but that's something we'll see. I'll always have fond memories of Kalamunda as the place where I grew up, where I met lots of people and a lot of my sporting needs were assessed then and started from then; and there's some lovely people there.

**Excellent.**

Good.

**Thank you very much.**

My pleasure. I hope it's been of some benefit.

Interview ends 55 minutes 16 seconds

**Oral History interview**

**Marcia Maher**

**Interview date: 26 April 2013**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2013 my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Marcia Maher for my Curtin University thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place. So I'll just start with a little bit about you, your name and your birthdate please.**

My name is Marcia Maher and my birthdate is 4<sup>th</sup> March 1948.

**Thank you and just a little bit about your family please.**

My parents, I notice later on you say describe your family, so I've decided to-

**Your parents.**

My parents were both born in Britain, my father in Scotland, in Glasgow, and my mother in Sheffield in England and they came out when they were very young children. So it was just my brother and me in my nuclear family, my brother is adopted, so my mother had me when she was thirty nine (39) years old, biologically her first child.

**So obviously their parents decided to move to Australia. Do you know why they decided to move to Australia?**

Yes I suppose it was a climate thing, the whole idea of a new opportunity for the family. But I was a bit surprised when we went to Glasgow just a few years ago, I know that my father's family moved in 1910 to Australia and yet in 1910 Glasgow was in its heyday in fact and the Clydeside Shipbuilding where my grandfather worked was also in its heyday and Glasgow was the second most important, largest city in the British Empire at the time. So it wasn't as if there was lack of opportunity there, so I don't know, just a new life I suppose. This was before World War One. As for my mother's family, there were a lot of problems there socially and in terms of poverty and they were definitely looking for a new life. As was the way at the time my grandfather, this is my maternal grandfather, moved to Western Australia in 1910 leaving his family behind for a couple of years. He went straight from Sheffield via Bristol through to Sandstone in Western Australia. By coincidence we went to Sandstone a few years ago and would you believe it but the big year in Sandstone's history is 1910 because that was the year that the railway arrived from Geraldton, through Yalgoo, Mount Magnet and onto Sandstone. So that's when my grandfather was there, what he was doing there I don't really know. I guess it was pastoral activity or else goldmining and he had absolutely no experience in either and he didn't stay there very long at all. After that the rest of the family came out and they started, as so many of them did, a farm near Corrigin; hacking it out from the virgin bush and living in whatever they could find really to live in which was a hessian bag house. So one of my mother's earliest memories is a flood; that when you go back and see, the rain would have come down Gorge Rock, sheeted down there, right across to their farm which was right at the foot of Gorge Rock. One of her earliest memories is a flood which she would have still been quite a young child and she remembers the saucepans floating by through, well the water was going through the house, obviously the saucepans wouldn't go through the walls but the water went through the hessian walls. So that was one of her very early memories. So about four (4) years after they took up this, what is now rather good property, they walked off and they went to Kalgoorlie where grandfather got a job in the mine. Very quickly after that went off to World War One and I'm remembering all of that yesterday which was Anzac Day, he fought at Fromelles. Came back as many of them did physically injured but mentally broken man.

**(5:00)**

**Thank you for that background.**

I can talk and talk you'll have to stop me Alethea.

**So that's a bit about your family and how they came to Australia. So how did you come to Kalamunda? We'll jump ahead a bit.**

We came to Kalamunda mainly because my very best friend, for whom I had been a bridesmaid in 1970, came to live here in a new house that she and her husband built. So I used to come up to Gooseberry Hill in fact to see her, thinking how far away it was but also thinking it's rather nice. So when I got married in 1972 and we were looking for a block of land which in those days, you realise now, was incredibly cheap then we looked at Thornlie by the Canning River, and we almost bought a block down there but there was an easement through it; going from another street down to the river and we didn't like the idea of an easement. So we thought 'no perhaps not'; came up here to see my friend and we bought a block just around the corner from her. And the price at the time for a quarter acre block which is quite small for Kalamunda but that was the size of the blocks in Gooseberry Hill at the time, was about four thousand dollars (\$4000). At the time I was a school teacher earning more than that in a year- that is gross, probably after tax about that; so when you consider what young people now pay for a block of land that was very cheap. Gooseberry Hill, I might tell you, in that new subdivision out there which had been a farm was amongst the cheapest land in the metropolitan area.

**I'm going to jump back in time again. You said you were a school teacher, can you describe a bit about your own schooling days perhaps.**

I was thinking about this, it was very fragmented, I make that as an excuse for all sorts of things. My father was in the Department for Civil Aviation so we moved frequently, every couple of years, we moved. So I started my kindergarten in Broome, continued kindergarten in Carnarvon and started school in Carnarvon. And then we came to live in Perth and I was at Belmont Primary School for five (5) years. Then we moved to Geraldton so I was at Geraldton Primary School for a year and then my family sort of settled down a bit as my father approached retirement so I was able to do all of my schooling in Geraldton. So all over the place actually, but none of it in Kalamunda.

**And then after school, you went on to-**

I had to come to Perth to go to university so I actually left home and I never actually went home except on holidays again. I think that's a major advantage country kids have actually, you leave home and there was only one university in those days and it was UWA (University of WA) and so I was there training to be a teacher, doing an Arts degree.

**Some of these questions don't apply, but that's ok. So entertainment wise in Geraldton when you were growing up and as well as in Perth when you were at university, what entertainment was there?**

Very church focused. I think in those days the Church was very much a social institution as well as religious institution. In Geraldton I was in a fabulous youth group, really, really great youth group so apart from studying, schoolwork and so on that was my major activity. I was thinking the other day, my father always used to like to drive so we frequently went on picnics afternoon tea picnics, you'd drive out

to a hill and you'd climb the hill and then you'd come back down to the car and have a cup of tea and then you'd potter off home. Or you'd go, obviously in Geraldton you could go to umpteen beaches all around the place too. Or you'd drive up to Northampton just to see a pretty little town, not knowing that later on you were going to live there. I didn't ever play sport after school so sport was not a factor in our lives really, not my life or my parents, or even my brother's. So yeah it was mainly the church and outdoor stuff, as well as that there were three (3) drive-ins in Geraldton so we went to the drive in nearly every week actually (laughs). My father liked the drive in but he didn't like queuing at the end of the movie to go home you see so we always had to be, we always missed the end of the movie as he tore off to beat everyone else.

(10:17)

And came the day of course when my mother had not put the speaker out of the window, back on to its stand in a timely fashion (laughs) so that got ripped out and came part way home with us as well. I think after that dad was a bit more, well he was a bit more careful about how he drove off. Missing the end of every movie was not ideal though as a passenger in the car, at least I could turn around and look out the back window to see what might be happening. So movies, my parents always saw, they wouldn't have called it movies, my father would have called it a film. So we used to see lots of movies, no television at all of course. In those days in Geraldton only wealthy people had televisions because not only did you have to live up on one of the sand hills where all the views were, the expensive properties, but you needed a very high, very, very high antennae. So there was no television to interrupt my studies, I'm quite thankful for that actually because I can watch way too much television these days.

### **So what about at university, when you were down in Perth?**

Oh I mainly just worked. I worked and worked and worked sixty (60) hours a week sort of work with my courses which interested me a great deal. I was also in the Undergraduate choral Society mainly because we knew there was an intervarsity every year and I was very keen to go on the intervarsity. And as soon as the intervarsity was over I did what they really hate you to do and I dropped out of the choir. Not because I was disinterested, but because I didn't have transport and it was at night time and getting home on buses was not really good but I didn't belong to any university clubs apart from that, I regret that. I do regret that.

### **Now you did mention about getting married and moving to Gooseberry Hill, so when did you meet your husband?**

I first started teaching in 1969 at Corrigin and I taught there for two (2) years and in those days you automatically went to the country when you taught, it was under the old bonding system so you didn't have much say in that, but after two (2) years you were pretty much guaranteed a city posting. So I came back to the city at that time, but I heard from friends that I still had in Corrigin that there was this dishy bloke who was the new Deputy at the Corrigin School, come up to a party and suss him out; so I did. And we were married six (6) months later.

### **And did you stay in Corrigin after that?**

No he was only there one year so by the time we were married in January he had already been transferred to a city school, so initially we lived in Maylands in a flat and then in Redcliffe in a duplex while the house was being built. The house in Gooseberry Hill.



**So back to Gooseberry Hill, what were your earliest memories of coming up to Kalamunda and Gooseberry Hill? I guess you already had some memories visiting your friend, so it could either be from that time or from when you moved here.**

Well what I remember in Kalamunda, well Gooseberry Hill was very much, there was the little shopping centre that there is there now, was not even there then. So there was a postal box was about all in terms of commerce I think. The rest came later, so we used to come to Kalamunda for everything when we lived in Gooseberry Hill. My earliest memories; well I suppose I remember things like I did all of my shopping in what is now the Village, the Village Shopping Centre. There was a, what is now the Retravisation shop, was a Tom the Cheap grocer and just down in what is now Dreams or whatever it is, down there in the arcade was a Tip Top Butchers and also you walked through one shop into the other and that was the fruit and veg shop. So that was where I did my shopping. What else do I remember? When we first started coming to Kalamunda when we'd bought the block we used to come up every few weeks to familiarise ourselves and what I remember were the pine trees, fabulous pine trees, many of which are now dead, because they'd be a hundred years old last year I think most of them.

(15:14)

But also I remember a fabulous Dutch bakery I suppose you'd call it, a pastry cook, a bit more than a bakery and he used to make the most wonderful peppery, spicy pasties. So we'd sit under the pine trees eating these pasties every time we came up here. So that would have been about 1973 and that's where the Chinese takeaway shop is now, in Canning Road. I also remember Rhodes and Underwood's, a little shop you could go into there which is where the Commonwealth Bank is now. In a lot of ways it's changed greatly but I was thinking, preparing for this interview, a lot of things haven't changed much at all actually. So it's easy to emphasise what was and is now but I guess by the time I got here the really rapid development period during the 1960s had already happened. So I missed that real before and after bit.

**So what are some of the things that have stayed the same from that time?**

I guess what is attractive about Kalamunda to a lot of people is the village atmosphere and that, as you would know, is based very much on Haynes Street and that streetscape rather than just a great big shopping centre like most suburbs have now. I mean activities have changed within shops, what is now Bunnings used to be a Food Fair shop, that was another big grocery shop, the Village Centre's changed a bit, Walker's Hardware that used to be right at the top is now Thai on the Hill but it seems to me that the actual shop, the building hasn't changed much at all. Over the other side of the road on Haynes Street that building which is the oldest shop still existing in Kalamunda hasn't changed much at all, they've even tried to bring the original façade back to make it look. One thing I do regret, I think regret is probably a silly word to use, but Hastings shop; Hastings shop was a fabulous drapery sort of shop right there where Harcourts the real estate agent is. That was good to go into, except on a hot day because it wasn't air-conditioned, it had a wooden floor, had overhead fans which just push the hot air around on a hot day, but you could buy just about anything there from clothes, sheets, towels, cottons for sewing, in those days I used to do a lot of sewing can't believe it now but I did then. So that was sort of not a general store, not in the real sense, but just an interesting old shop that was a real reminder of the early days of Kalamunda I think. So it was a shame when that was totally changed and carved up and taken over mainly by a real estate agent and other small shops. But really Kalamunda in a lot of ways, as I say, hasn't changed much for me over what is now forty (40) years.

**You've described some of the businesses in the town centre already, are there any other standout businesses that you can think of or other aspects of the town centre that you haven't mentioned?**

Well the big, big change of course was when Kalamunda Central, now Kalamunda Centro, came. That changed, and that was a very deliberate change, there was an attempt to totally relocate where people shopped. I can remember I had a friend who owned and operated the newsagent at the bottom of Haynes Street and she was canvassed to think about coming up and joining the new Centro when it arrived. And she was given the fear tactics really that she'd go out of business if she attempted to compete with what was coming. So it was quite a threatening, fearful time for shop owners. She stayed where she was in Haynes Street, she was not prepared to pay the very, very high; I was going to use the word extortionate but that's a bit emotive isn't it. Accurate but emotive lease fees so she stayed where she was and as we all know that newsagent is still operating with different owners, at the bottom of Haynes Street.

(20:18)

So there was room for both but many business people, I think, felt very threatened by the arrival of Kalamunda Central which must have been about 1986 I think, sometime around there. I guess thinking, also in Barberry Square that used to be a big Freecorns, another big grocery shop, so we've really come down to now within the Kalamunda village area of Coles and IGA. I guess the other thing that I often remember is the people who own IGA have been long term members of the church I belong to and it actually got announced from the pulpit by the minister, which I think was pretty much unprecedented in my thinking, to encourage us all to keep shopping at Crabbs, now called IGA, because the competition from the newly arrived Coles was going to kill their business. That fight between the new big boys and the original business proprietors, which is inevitable we know, but that was really quite a dramatic thing during the 80s. And as we know both of those, Coles has gone from bigger to better, bigger to bigger and bigger again and IGA or Crabbs still operates quite happily I think within our community.

**So it seems to me from what you were saying there were a lot of duplicate shops, a lot of grocery shops. Thinking about it, it doesn't seem like the population would need those duplicated shops but obviously they did.**

I guess that's the modern thinking, one big shop, but in those days they were all quite a bit smaller than the existing Coles; but Freecorns took up quite a large area of what is Barberry Square so it was a good sized shop. And also Bunnings as you know is quite a big shop because the building hasn't changed, so they were sort of moderate sized businesses rather than the huge giant Coles.

**It's interesting, some of the other people I've interviewed talked about the duplication of shops even in early days when it was a holiday place and it just sort of surprises me that I guess, the population it hasn't been very big all the way through its history can support all these different shops. It's good.**

They were all much smaller and I guess much more labour intensive because the way you shop has changed so dramatically. I can remember even as a child, teenager, living in Geraldton so that was in the early 60s when you went to a shop to buy your groceries you stood on one side of the counter and the shop person stood on the other and you asked 'a jar of vegemite please', he/she went off and got the jar of vegemite and brought it back and then you announced the next thing you'd like. So shopping was done in that old style, rather than self-serve so that was a

dramatic change that I think came to Perth mainly in the late 50s so it was inevitable that it would occur in Kalamunda as well. And large scale was I guess where you get your cheap prices. The other big change I guess in buildings is the Methodist Church that I used to go to when I first came to Kalamunda. The building is still there, rather beautifully retained now as a house, but the building is still pretty much as it was with some interior changes of course. But a new Uniting Church was built quite central Kalamunda so that was another big change. The other thing was the library, by the time I got to Kalamunda in the 70s the library, which had been built in 1963, was obviously in existence but it was just the original part. Now it's almost double the size though the coming of the stain glass window in the late 80s reduced the operating size of the library because this magnificent stain glass window which takes up much of a wall had to take priority.

(25:08)

So books had to be moved, you couldn't have books in front even though it was a library, you couldn't have books in front of the stain glass window. So to go into Kalamunda library now, even though its twice as big as it was, the books were all crowded into one area so that this magnificent stain glass window, can you detect an attitude problem here (laughs). So it's just a shame that that wonderful piece of artwork was not located somewhere more appropriate.

### **Or even a little bit higher on the wall perhaps?**

Well originally it was just to be the top panels. Yes it was just to be the quite small top panels this magnificent community stained glass window project and then someone, I never found out who fortunately, had the bright idea 'why don't we do the whole window?' In other words the whole wall, so they did. Anyway it is still an efficient library, even if it is very, very crowded in regards to its book stacks. I'm quite sure it complies with standards, just.

### **So who were some of the local identities of the area?**

Well Rolf Stileburger is the one who always comes to mind. When we were first in Kalamunda forty (40) years ago Rolf was a real estate agent and he had a little shop just where, near the banks, I guess near where the Commonwealth Bank is now [in Haynes Street]; it was just one of the old houses he'd converted into a business. Rolf was always very involved in Lions, even back in those days, and there was a permanent second hand book sale on his verandah there. So you could go to the real estate agent to get a book to read you see (laughs) and Rolf was always there. He's still walking around the street, an old man now of course, but still walking around talking to people. I think he's worn out about twenty (20) dogs at this stage because he always has a dog in tow. I noticed recently when the ABC featured Kalamunda for some program or other there was Rolf walking down Haynes Street. I thought I don't know whether they would have organised that or whether he just happened to be there as he very frequently is. Another person I don't hear about much, I don't even know whether she's still alive these days, is Edie Williams. For years and years and years Edie Williams ran or coordinated the community based meals on wheels. She didn't ever get paid, she was given an honorarium which I think was just maybe a hundred dollars (\$100) a year or something to do this full time job; everyone knew Edie. Anyone who worked as a volunteer in the Kalamunda Meals on Wheels respected her, loved her, she was just great value. So I remember her. The dry-cleaning business in Haynes Street seems to have had a father then a son proprietor for probably at least thirty five (35) years. So you still see them there and you think 'gosh you've been in this dry cleaning business for a very long time' which is a bit of a surprise I think because so many more modern fabrics these days you don't really need to dry clean. So clearly, and the other thing they always did,

perhaps still do, is process film. Well that's another thing that has certainly faced a bit of competition in the last ten (10) years or so but they're still there and I'm delighted to see that they are. The other one is Kim Johnston Real Estate, tiny weeny little premises right there in the middle of Haynes Street, now run by Kim's son Brett Johnston. So lots of changes but once again not so many changes.

**They're some people which haven't been mentioned by other people I've interviewed,**

Oh really?

**So it's nice to have a bit of a different slant on the identities.**

I had to think about that though, I guess you know people and so you walk down the street and see people you recognise through your activities but they may not be what other people regard as local identities, so I had to give that a bit of thought.

**It has been a bit of a tricky question for some people. Community groups and organisations that you have been involved with, or have you been involved with any I should ask.**

Yes.

(30:01)

Lots of community groups over the years. In the six (6) years we lived in Gooseberry Hill in the house we built, five (5) of those years I was not working, that was the period of time in which we produced our two (2) children; got very involved, not so much in established organisations that I could name but in playgroups. Local area, self-organised playgroups that sort of thing, plus the church I taught Sunday School and got quite involved in ladies groups and so on. But my husband was quite involved in Apex almost immediately we arrived in Gooseberry Hill, he was invited to join Apex. You don't hear much about Apex these days but it was a very dynamic group locally, a service club for young men specifically. We met in that group of people, it was all male in those days, but there were lots of ladies evenings and lots of little kids, so lots of picnics and so on. So it really was, in a way, for all of us; but the friends we met then, nearly forty (40) years ago we still have largely through that organisation. Once they got too old, all these blokes joined the Old Apexians Still In Service, OASIS, and that's sort of, well that still exists but as well as that a lot of blokes have gone into form the Kalamunda Men's Shed. It's not a complete transfer across but very largely. As well as that just school organisations, my husband was a school teacher during that time and later I went back teaching, and then for many years he was the Principal at Lesmurdie Senior High School and there's lots of spin offs from school activities so we were involved there too. But more recently, since my retirement, I have been involved in lots of organisations as well which I can mention should you wish or not?

**Yes please, that would be great thank you.**

Well as you know pretty involved in the Kalamunda and District Historical Society which I joined right back in the time I was working in the Kalamunda Library, which is where I worked for twelve (12) years, because one of my responsibilities there was the management of the Local History Collection. So I joined the Historical Society right back then and I'm still a member; but I've become since retirement surprisingly having been a secondary school teacher I've become involved in a lot of early years groups which has been quite fascinating and both in the foothills as well. I'm also a board member of the Foothills Information and Referral Service and they

have an early years program as well that I'm involved in down there. But we're trying to look across, instead of looking small and insular, we're trying to look much more outward and networking so that these groups can work together most effectively with limited resources, let's at least be as effective as we can. I've belonged to a political party for over thirty (30) years so I'm fairly active in that in Kalamunda as well and the church, the Uniting Church and more recently become involved in, talking about networking, a group called All We Need Is Right Here. It's all about community development but it's looking particularly at looking at what the community's already got, the assets, organisations, resource people it's already got and networking in a way, largely these days via a very expensive, extensive website to I guess take the services, or knowledge of the services to as many local people as possible.

**So the primary role is a networking role of that group?**

That's how I see it, yes.

**Is there anything else on your list?**

No.

**Well you mentioned you did have two (2) children, do you want to mention a little bit about your family?**

Ok, my husband Ray and two (2) daughters, both born in Kalamunda Hospital, during that Gooseberry Hill period when we lived there before, that was only a six (6) year period after which we went away again.

(35:10)

My older daughter Felicity, married now living in Sydney, and she's produced my only grandchild, Leo, who's five (5) months old now. My younger daughter Kirsty lives in Maylands, she got married just this month to an Englishman so she's just yesterday returned home from England because they had forty (40) people at a wedding here in Perth and then they went to London and had another forty (40) people in a restaurant to celebrate. So just the two (2) girls. My brother lives in Gooseberry Hill, my brother and sister in law, and nephews and my husband's brother and family also live in Gooseberry Hill. So much to our surprise seeing as how I've had a very fragmented early years in terms of moving around the place, and my husband is definitely a Fremantle boy as all his family was, we largely live up here now.

**Just seeing what I've missed on the list. You mentioned you moved to Gooseberry Hill and then you moved away were there any changes between the time you moved in and then returned?**

We were away only eight (8) years, four (4) years in Northampton which is in the news today for all the wrong reasons and four (4) years in Tom Price. When we moved back my husband had a new school at Swanbourne so we really thought we'd move there but the cost of the properties in Swanbourne were prohibitive so we thought there's no place like Kalamunda so we bought another house, this time in Kalamunda. As for changes, no I guess not except during that time Kalamunda Centro had been built so yes that was a major change but one of the lovely things was to come back and feel as though it was home and almost to a point, pick up where you left off. So just that feeling of community and intact community which you could opt in or out of over that eight (8) year period was a lovely feeling; so we

moved back with pleasure and my husband of course for quite a few years had an awful lot of travel from Kalamunda every day to Swanbourne and back.

**Well it's good that there was that sense of community to come back to.**

That's very important to me. You do notice a lot of things, did I mention Walker's is now Thai on the Hill.

**Yes.**

Well things like that, you noticed they'd changed but they were not big things, they were not dramatic things.

**I think that's just about all my questions. I didn't ask you about travelling to Perth, you mentioned it seemed a long distance when you were visiting your friend. Did it still seem a long way to Perth when you were living in Gooseberry Hill and Kalamunda?**

Well we very rarely went to Perth, I guess that was the point. My husband was teaching up here, I was home with the kids or out in the community with the kids, we often didn't go down the hill in a month, why would you? And your social life was up here, but one thing I would point out is, when I was a primary school aged child living in Redcliffe we would come up Kalamunda Road into Kalamunda just to have a drive. I remember those mock Tudor houses as you drive up the hill but it was quite a short distance in those days because you came via Epsom Avenue, directly up Maida Vale Road to what we now call 'six ways', no stop signs, no traffic lights, no roundabouts and of course in those days there was no international airport. So now the road has to be redirected around the international airport, taking much longer and since then they've put in Abernethy Road where there's stop lights which take up a bit of time and then the development along Kalamunda Road through High Wycombe which slows the traffic down enormously; roundabouts, people entering and exiting from the shops there now and also more lights at what is now Roe Highway.

(40:12)

The period of time to get to Kalamunda is infinitely, well that's incorrect, but greatly longer than it was in the 50s; that's if you come by Kalamunda Road. Welshpool Road I think via Lesmurdie has not had quite as many problems. But when I lived in Redcliffe if you wanted anything the doctor, the dentist, post a letter, go to the bank my parents went into the city for everything. You caught a bus and you went into what they called 'town' but that's from Redcliffe. In the time I've lived in Kalamunda I've never worked in the city, my husband's never worked in the city, there was no need to go to Perth very often except by choice, except for entertainment. If you wanted to go to a concert or something then you'd probably have to go into Perth. I do love the city, having said that, I love the city occasionally go in there just for fun because I think it's got real character, Perth, and there's lots of interesting things to see and do but the distance from Perth, I guess what I'm saying is not a factor.

**You mentioned everything was contained within Kalamunda, the social life and facilities, shops and things like that. Was there much relationship between the foothills and Kalamunda itself or the suburbs of the area on top of the hill?**

Well you always had to drive through the foothills to go anywhere so I'm very aware of the 'up the hill', 'down the hill' divide. But I think it's one way more than the other actually because Kalamunda people do go through the foothills quite often but when

I worked for the Shire of Kalamunda in Kalamunda Library, everything that happened at the top of the hill had to happen at the bottom of the hill. We were also quite aware of the work done with the foothills history but I still think there is a bit of a divide. This came to me quite dramatically a week or so ago, I have a young friend who's organising a series of events for this All We Need Is Right Here organisation. She was able to organise an event at Maida Vale which is near where she lives with great facility because she knew people at the church there and she knew this and she knew that; then she had to organise another event for Lesmurdie. Now this dynamic young lady had never been to say the Lesmurdie Club, she didn't know where it was, she wasn't aware of Lawnbrook Road and she'd never been to Pickering Brook, she'd never been to the Bickley Valley because there's no need for her because she does all of her shopping, socialising in the foothills or Midland. And I thought the real divide is that there's a whole lot of people who live within the Shire of Kalamunda who never come up the hill to what we call Kalamunda. That made me really quite sad I'd have to say, but no I'm very aware of the foothills and its history and as I say I'm a member of the Foothills Information and Referral Service so I am in the foothills, in Forrestfield or High Wycombe, at least weekly and recently much more. So I see us all as one single entity but I know a lot of people do not and I know a lot of politicians, that is local government politicians, have used this perceived divide to advantage.

**I guess, like what you were saying about Maida Vale, all the suburbs have their own identities as well within the whole Shire. So you talk about Kalamunda and then you have to talk about the specific localities, so different again.**

The overriding term is perhaps mis-, that's why we came up with this dreadful name for an organisation which is to network, All We Need Is Right Here.

**It's a very long name.**

It's a very long name and it's very easy to get 'all you need is right here', so that if you do a web search you don't find it. So overcoming that problem of what is Kalamunda and that awful, sometimes existing, divide between the foothills and 'up the hill' (sighs) is laborious and annoying and I think as I said before used to advantage for some people.

**(45:23)**

**Has there been, because I know that organisation's been around for a little while, has there been some results from the networking that has been set up through the website?**

Yes we keep pretty strict results in terms of, the website's not yet complete, it should be complete this month. We're talking about \$30,000 worth of website so it should be really good, there's facebook links; and statistics are kept by the person who manages the website and the IT side of things but we've had a lot of suburban launches just to get people used to the idea of what this organisation with its unwieldy name actually is and quite a few people have joined up to get our e-newsletter; but I guess in some ways the results will never be a tangible, even totally measurable thing because you'll be getting networking results that you won't necessarily know about. But we've got some measurable results already and a great deal of interest, though I sometimes wonder, this is an area where there's such a sense of community, if you want it to be, or you can use Kalamunda just as a dormitory suburb and I don't know, work in Joondalup or something, you'd hardly ever be here. So I sometimes think we already have such a sense of community that

we don't need an All We Need Is Right Here but of course that is not the case for many, many people.

**I guess something that's come out of these interviews are the different kinds of communities within the community. People I've interviewed have said about the sports groups, church groups, businesses- people been involved with businesses so it's been really interesting.**

I went to the Kalamunda Show for the first time in fifteen (15) years just a week or so ago. I was just overwhelmed with the activity there, so much for so many people, but such contributions in terms of its still almost a little agricultural show, the children's art, the different service groups there, even some church groups they've decided they should be there, the Men's Shed was there of course with its stall. It was just once again that terrific sense of a community in action, very heartening, I went away on a high.

**Very good. I've got one more question, is there anything else that you might have missed from any other parts before I ask the last question?**

No.

**Wrapping up what we've just been talking about community, what do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**

Well what I've really hammered home already in this interview, a sense of community. I know my mother came to live here when she was already, after the death of my father in Redcliffe, she came to live in Kalamunda to be closer to her two (2) children. She came here in 1986 so she was already seventy seven (77) years old, something like that, she was just able to join in the church, join in the Meals on Wheels, join in the CWA, Country Women's Association, with the greatest of ease. She just sort of came in and slipped into all of this activity because it's all there and she loved Kalamunda and the only thing that saddened her was 'why didn't Bob and I come and live here years and years ago?' So that sense of being one with your community, I guess also it's just a beautiful place to live physically in terms of the Bickley Valley and even our zig zag and the views you get; and I think Lesmurdie Falls really has to be something that could be really, really developed because when it rains, and it does sometimes, it's a beautiful, beautiful falls to have so close to the city; but above all it's that streetscape still creating, despite the big shopping centres and so on, you've still got the streetscape of small businesses which makes you feel as if you're in a real community. How many hundred times have I used that word?

**It's a good word. I think it's an important word for this sort of interview really, that's what we're talking about.**

I'd agree with that obviously.

**Excellent, well I guess that's the end of the interview. Nothing else to add?**

No I think I've talked flat out for quite some time, that's me done I think.

**Well thank you very, very much for your memories and thoughts and your time.**

My pleasure.



Interview ends 50 minutes 53 seconds

**Oral History interview**

**Neil Pember**

**Interview date: 4 June 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 4<sup>th</sup> June 2011 Alethea du Boulay interviewing Neil Pember for my Curtin University thesis project for the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**I'll just start with your name and your birth date, please Neil.**

Okay. My name's Neil Pember. My date of birth is the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of January 1939.

**Can you tell me a little bit about your family please?**

About my family? Well, dad was a carpenter. We lived in Heath Road, Kalamunda just down from what is now IGA. He worked for Wally Martin, he was a builder in Kalamunda. I think there was only about two (2) or three (3) builders in those days. It was all timber frame houses in those days. My mother, in those days housewives did not work, they stayed, well, I shouldn't say that; they worked but they stayed home. Mum had four (4) kids and that was her job: she stayed home looking after the kids. We all had to feed the chooks and milk the cows, all that sort of business. Mum was the housewife, she looked after the house.

**What were your parents' names?**

My dad's name was Len Pember and my mother's name was Myrtle Pember.

**Had they grown up in Kalamunda themselves?**

Mum, well, mum and dad were in the country when they were young. Mum was born in Katanning as was I, and mum and dad met; dad was a farm labourer, and he met up with mum. Mum was working, I think it was called Koobeelya, it was a girls' school in Katanning and she was working there. And mum and dad met up and of course my eldest brother Jim was born and then I was born, and we left Katanning in 1942 and moved to Kalamunda. That was during the War of course and dad moved to Kalamunda and joined the army.

**So what are your earliest memories of Kalamunda?**

What's my earliest memories of Kalamunda? I can recall primary school. We lived in Heath Road, right at the very end of Heath Road overlooking the city, that's west of Seaview Terrace on the hill. The three (3) boys had to walk up to the primary school, which was about roughly one kilometre, barefoot. There were no shoes in those days. We couldn't afford shoes. So we walked to school and I think that was from 1944 to 45. When did I start high school? I started high school in '51; '52 and '53 so it was up until then. But 1944 I started [primary] school; in fact, I had to start school twelve (12) months early because my eldest brother wouldn't go to school without me so the headmaster allowed me to go, so I was in front of myself by twelve (12) months. But, yeah, in those days Kalamunda was a country town, if you like. It was mostly gravel roads other than in the town area. And the town in those days was primarily at the top of Haynes Street in Railway Road, where the hotel is. We had the post office up there, we had Hawley's Shoe Store, Dick Marshall's the barber was there, the hotel that's still there, Bavistock and Orrel butchers, Slatyer's Estate Agency; this is all in Railway Road; Thompson's corner store which is now called Thai on the Hill and Kostera's Bus Service was just around the corner; so all the town was up the top. It wasn't until the 1950s, mid 50s, that it started progressively going, moving down the hill. And as you know, the post office is now down the bottom of the hill. Haynes Street I'm talking about, that's in Barber Street; but, yeah, gradually moved down the hill. We had Keith Gillespie's Chemist shop that was up the top of Haynes Street; Milton Stove's Butchers that was directly opposite Central

Road. In those days Central Road was a central road and it went right through from Haynes Street right through up to what is now the high school. It was blocked off at some stage. Can you just hold. [pause in the recording]

(5:05)

**Yep.**

I mentioned that the old Kalamunda, at the top of Haynes Street we had Keith Gillespie's chemist shop, I think I've mentioned that. Milton Stove's butcher was directly opposite Central Road. Bob Steer's paper shop was on the corner which is now the Commonwealth Bank, Mrs Finlay's pie shop was next door to the Stove's butcher shop and then Crabb's, which is IGA, was on the opposite corner than it is now [on corner of Heath Road and Canning Road] but it was only a tiny little store in those days. IGA's a lot bigger store now but Crabb's has been there for a long time. Stirk Park in those days was a dairy. I'm a little bit out of town. Does that matter?

**No, that's fine.**

Stirk Park used to be called Williams' dairy. Matter of fact we used to have our cow over there, our family cow; and I had a horse when I was young, and that was always paddocked or agisted, if you like. It never cost us anything.

**No?**

Oh, no; money didn't change hands in those days. We didn't have any money to change hands. Williams' dairy, now the cows for Williams' dairy, there's a whole bundle of them, they always used to be paddocked at the very end of Heath Road, right down on the escarpment. Each morning and evening, they'd be driven up Temby Avenue, behind the primary school to the corner of Boonooloo Road and Kalamunda Road, there're big double gates there, and they'd be let into the park which was Williams' dairy. They'd be milked and they'd be driven back to the end of Heath Road again; and that was done every morning and every night. Kay's Kash and Karry was on the corner of Haynes Street and Canning Road; that's the north east corner and that was run by Len Bennett; that's at the foot of Haynes Street. Beside Kay's Kash and Karry was our tennis courts. He provided the tennis courts and that's where the Kalamunda tennis courts, tennis club started. It's moved from there a couple of times since but the tennis courts are currently up by the Shire. On the very corner was Kookaburra Tea Rooms, that's on the corner of Haynes Street, and all the kids and all the teenagers used to go there for milkshakes. I remember when I was a teenager we always used to go in there to, everybody, all the youngsters would all meet at the Kookaburra. That was the meeting place. That was Kalamunda. What else can I say about Kalamunda? The railway line of course used to go through the town. I can remember coming up on the train from Midland in the train and I can also remember the conductor walking along the outside of the train holding on, collecting fares, going from carriage to carriage. I can only assume that must've been on the zigzag because the train couldn't have been going too fast, I mean, and it wouldn't be allowed to do anything like that today (laughs). I mean, occupational health and safety, they'd jump straight down their throat. And the unions wouldn't allow it because it wasn't in, in those days. Kalamunda, yeah; it was a little old country town. The population wasn't all that much in those days either.

**You mentioned the shops were mainly on Railway Road. What was occupying Haynes Street?**

Haynes Street?

**Yeah.**

Oh well, it came down the corner of Haynes Street from Central Avenue but - well Central Road or Central whatever you call it now, the shops. Well, Kostera's occupied the whole corner down to Central Avenue.

**Ok.**

Ok, Central Road. Then there was Steere's paper shop and then it was houses. On the opposite side directly opposite Central Road where, as I said, was the butcher's shop and then Mrs Finlay's pie shop, and then there were houses. Well, there wasn't too many houses but there was a little shop there. What was that called? There was a little store there but it was virtually vacant land.

**Oh, ok.**

Yeah, on that side. That's on the northern side of Haynes Street. But, yeah, now we've got banks and everything where the houses and that were.

(10:09)

**A bit different. Ok, so schooling, you mentioned you went to school a year early. Did you have any memorable teachers or memories of school?**

Oh yeah. Kalamunda Primary School wasn't very big in those days. There was, what number we on now? Number 8? Well, my two (2) brothers and I and my sister we all attended Kalamunda Primary School, and Ron Stevens and Mrs Eaton and Charlie Evans. Charlie Evans was the Headmaster. He didn't like Jim much, my brother, eldest brother, he always got the cuts, the cane. Ron Stevens was pretty good, he was my teacher. Mrs Eaton, I think she lived in Pickering Brook and her son Terry. So there was four (2) teachers and then later on I can remember Barbara Genoni, she came in. I went to primary school there til 1950. There was no high school in Kalamunda in those days. I had to go in '51, '52, '53 I caught the 7.30am bus. It was the Kalamunda Kostera's red and black buses in those days; 7.30 down to Perth and then I caught the penny tram from Perth out to Mt Lawley. So I was out at Mt Lawley Senior High School, which is now a technical college I think, for three (3) years and I even rode my pushbike down sometimes. I mean you couldn't do that now with the traffic but I used to ride. I had a nice pushbike and I used to ride my pushbike a lot and I rode it fairly frequently. Can't say how often but a number of times I rode it down to Mt Lawley. But in those days we used to go down Maida Vale Road and that now the railway, that goes right across the top of it. I mean we used to go straight through and come out at Epsom Avenue in Belmont but the runway of the airport is right across that now. And this side it's all built out and now you've got a railway line, we never had any of that down there. So my school finished in 1953 and Christmas 1953 I started work. I mean in those days pretty well everyone got a job as soon as you left school, whatever it may've been but I started at Christmas 1953 and I started in the Kalamunda Post Office. There was no dole money or anything like that in those days. You want some money, your parents couldn't give you much pocket money or anything so you went to work. So that's what I did.

**Ok, so what was your job at the post office?**

My job at the post office was delivering telegrams. There was no such thing as mobile phones and even telephones. We had a telephone at our house but we were

only one of the few. There were a lot of red telephone boxes around Kalamunda. If you wanted to ring up you went to the telephone box and then people started getting phones on to their houses. My job when I first started work was delivering telegrams. Now there was two (2) of us because we took turns, one week I would be delivering telegrams. These days people just pick up a phone and give the message but in those days you went to a post office and if you wanted to send a birthday message or a wedding message, you know, congratulations; you would go to a post office and it would cost you a few bob and they would send it by morse code to wherever it had to go and then the telegram boy would deliver it. That's what I had to do and we had very heavy pushbikes and they are not very nice pushing uphill. If you had a telegram that had to go right to the bottom of Kalamunda hill, nice going down. Coming back I used to hang on the back of buses and trucks and I wiped out about five (5) pushbikes where I fell off and the bus ran over one once.

(15:00)

I was hanging onto the side of the passenger door of my father's truck talking to him as he was driving and I lost my grip and I jumped to the side but his rear wheels ran up and over my pushbike (laughs). I had to explain that to the Postmaster. I just told him I fell off and hit a tree or some damn silly thing.

### **Did you have to pay for the damage to the bike?**

No. Oh, yeah, I wrecked 'em. Not only that, at 5pm every day we had to put the mail on the Kalamunda bus to go to Perth but the post office closed at 5pm, the mail closed at 5pm and the bus left at 5 pm. So you had to be very quick smart, tie the bag off, you threw it on to the handlebars of your bike and you pedalled from the post office, which is where Coles is now [Railway Road], straight down to the corner of Haynes Street, which is only what, about three (300) or four hundred (400) yards, three hundred (300) yards. You'd go like buggery getting down there with the mail hanging over. The mail was a big bag, hanging over the thing and you'd throw it straight into the bus and they would sign for it and take off. What I did on one occasion, I often used to do was go round, the driver would be sitting in the bus ready to go, I would come around his bus like this and park in front of his bus, and I'd put the pedal of the pushbike on the kerb to hold the bike up. Well on one occasion I did exactly that, took the mail off the bike, threw it in the bus, signed for it and the driver went forward with his bus, clipped my pushbike, lay it down and ran straight over the middle of it. So from then on we were told we had to park at the back of the bus, and I always used to [park in front] to stop the bus from going. I had to park behind him in future (laughs). I was wiping out too many pushbikes. I think I've got a little bit down here further but I was on the exchange and as I said before, there was two (2) of us, one week I delivered telegrams, the next week you started work and you worked on the exchange. There was a manual exchange, turn the handle and you'd ring up and they'd say, 'number please' and you'd plug it in and give them the number. Well I can recall in June 1956 I was working on the exchange when it went automatic, and I was then out of a job on the night shift because instead of having to turn the handle to get the exchange you then had the big black heavy telephone and you could dial your own number. That was in June 1956 Kalamunda went automated on the telephone exchange.

### **So you were out of a job on the exchange. What did you do after that?**

Oh, well it worked out. I don't know what happened after that, 1956. I left in 1959, I got promoted into Perth so I was there still doing the telegrams. March 1959 I went to Perth.

**You mentioned that you were delivering telegrams down the hill. Did the Kalamunda Post Office service a lot of what is now the Shire of Kalamunda? What was the area it serviced?**

Our boundary wasn't the Kalamunda Shire because that goes right out to Pickering Brook. It was down to the sixway service station [intersection of Kalamunda, Gooseberry Hill and Hawtin Roads] at the foot of the hill, it was all of Gooseberry Hill, right down as far as you could go and out to Lesmurdie. Lesmurdie Post Office did their own. I think it might have been out to about Glyde Road in Lesmurdie and that was; we had to deliver telegrams. As soon as you got a telegram you had to take it out. Now if I got a telegram for Gooseberry Hill and as soon as I got back then I got one for the bottom of Kalamunda Road then you got back and then you went out to Lesmurdie. I tell you what, you were busy, busy, busy; and there was only one telegram boy and the next message just had to wait until you got back. But we were very fit in those days, delivering. Mind you I was only sixteen (16) and seventeen (17). Yeah; I was very fit in those days.

**That's very interesting. Ok, so that was your working life. What did you do and your family do in your spare time?**

Never had much spare time. After I, well, no; I bought a horse, well my father bought a horse for me when I was around about sixteen (16), and a couple of my mates had horses so we'd always go riding on the horses.

(20:08)

Jim Portwine, the Kalamunda Bakery, Jim Portwine had horses. He had racehorses and he had two (2) racehorses that were any good. He had a couple more but two (2) were any good, and often he would ride one and I would ride the other, exercising them. Just go out and do some exercising them. In latter years, I got married in 1960, and poor old Jimmy Portwine was riding his horse at the back of my house, my first house was in Keats Road in Gooseberry Hill, and the horse threw him off and killed him. So that was just unfortunate but I never rode a horse for him after I got married and I even stopped playing football after I got married too because I was too busy with my house. But spare time, I had the horse, used to do that; riding that a lot. Then after that I bought myself a little Austin car, I think for a hundred and twenty pounds (£120), a little Austin 7 car, 1934 Austin 7. That was a little cut down version of like a little MG and I named it Tom Thumb and everybody in Kalamunda knew Tom Thumb so they knew me (laughs).

But my horse, in those days nobody had much money. I couldn't afford to shoe him but I looked after his feet, but I couldn't afford to put shoes on him. I used to keep him over in Williams' dairy which is now Stirk Park but on the corner of Headingly Road, Kalamunda Road and Canning Road was the gate; there was a double gate. The gate consisted of one top rail, just one rail and the one rail would've been a bit over a metre off the ground, probably the height of this table which is around, yeah; a bit over a metre, a metre and a quarter. If I was cantering past the corner of that gate, as I often did, no way would he go past it. He would go down on his knees and go underneath it and just swipe me straight off the back. Oh, he was a lovely horse. Yes; we had a lot of fun with him. But other than that, we the kids, the locals around Kalamunda in the summertime we would walk down to Rocky Pool and go for a swim. Rocky Pool is right down the end of Spring Road if you like, but it's about another kilometre further down, that's heading north, but we used to go down from the end of Ledger Road in Gooseberry Hill down to it. And in those days it was just a very rough bush track and we used to call it Snake Gully because there's a lot of snakes (laughs) along it and the damn track was only a foot track; but all us kids used to go down there barefoot and think nothing of it.

**So that was in summer; what did you do in winter?**

Well, we didn't go swimming down Rocky Pool but, no, we used to play football and cricket of course as young kids do and everything was at the Kalamunda Oval which is now called Kostera Oval. I dunno, we kept ourselves busy running around the place.

**Was there any organised entertainment in Kalamunda when you were growing up, or even as an adult?**

Not organised entertainment when we were kids; no. There wasn't enough, no; there wasn't enough organisations or anything but as soon as I got to, oh, seventeen (17) I suppose, we had, we organised a Junior Farmers and it was called The Kalamunda Junior Farmers. I finished up, I was the President of the Kalamunda Junior Farmers and it must've been when I was seventeen (17) because I met my wife there at the Junior Farmers. In the Junior Farmers people from Mundijong and other country localities would come to Kalamunda as we would go down to them and have gymkhana type things. Mr Ces Wright (doorbell).

[break in recording]

(25:02)

**The Junior Farmers.**

Right, so I was in the Junior Farmers and we used to have. Mr Ces Wright was an orchardist in Bickley and he used to provide us with his tractor, loaned us his tractor. He brought it up and we would learn things from it. He'd teach us how to change the spark plugs and, you know, a little bit of things like that with his tractor. We used to have wheelbarrow races and reversing your car between flags with a trailer on, you know, things like that, that a lot of people cannot reverse cars, and put a trailer on and they're hopeless. That's something that we learnt when I was seventeen (17), eighteen (18) years old. Other than that, what else can I say? There weren't many organisations. We had the tennis club and I was in the tennis club. I'm a life member of the tennis club. In about 1959 we; there was no water in Kalamunda. I'm not sure of the year we got water but it was in the late 50s and prior to that if you wanted water in Kalamunda, Kalamunda Transport, Gordon Farrell in Heath Road, he had a big tanker and you would actually buy water from him just to fill up your rainwater tank, because every house had a rainwater tank.

What else was there? When I was a kid we had the Junior Farmers. If a fire started everybody went to the fire. Most of the men, you know, they'd go to the fire and help put the fire out. So we started, there was a group of us, I think about six (6), who started the Kalamunda Fire Brigade; so I'm a Foundation Member of the Kalamunda Fire Brigade and that was formed in 1959, I'm getting a bit old now. So I'm a Life Member of the Kalamunda Tennis Club. We were in that for a lot of years because my wife and family was in the tennis club.

I was never allowed to have a motorbike when I was a kid so I had my little car whenever we went out there was a number of the boys, there was about twelve (12) I suppose and most of them had motorbikes so they would toss their leather jackets and often their helmets and that in the back of the car, my car. And I'd take off and half the time I'd have three (3) or four (4) of the girls in my car too because they weren't allowed on motorbikes so, you know, (laughs) it was just one of those things. As I said before most of the roads around Kalamunda were gravel; for



instance, between Kalamunda and Mundaring was all gravel. If you wanted to go to a picnic to Mundaring Weir it was on gravel, corrugation, very rough corrugations. We had open air pictures; the picture theatre was in Heath Road which is just about opposite Brook Street. There was the open air theatre, next door to that was the dentist. Open air picture theatre and of course the picture theatre was in the Agricultural Hall in Kalamunda, in the winter time. The open air was in the summer and in the Agricultural Hall in winter. I can remember when I wasn't quite sixteen (16), I was a good footballer in those days and a good runner, there was one man I could not beat and that was Cliff Headland. I always came second to Cliff Headland, running, but he was a very good runner. When I was in the under sixteens (16s) I won the best and fairest for the Kalamunda Football Club and I slid down the banister of the Kalamunda Agricultural Hall and got a nice old splinter right up my leg it was about a two to three, two (2) and a half inches long. There was no doctors in those days in Kalamunda. I beg your pardon, there was one doctor, Dr Barber, lived on the corner of Central Road and Bert Street but he was an old World War I doctor, he couldn't see much, so my mother took me down to Midland in the car. We had an old car, a 1926 Dodge, and mum took me down to Midland and got me fixed up in Midland instead of going to old Dr Barber because he couldn't see much.

What else can I say? Kalamunda has certainly gone ahead in leaps and bounds. I mean we've got everything in Kalamunda now. You can buy yourself a new car in Kalamunda if you want to.

(30:13)

**Ok. Next on the list is travelling to Perth. Did you travel to Perth very often?**

No.

**You went to school in Mt Lawley.**

Travel into Perth; no. What number's that? (looking through papers). I never used to go to Perth much at all and neither did mum but I used to have to go to Perth every day from 1951, '52, '53. I caught the bus every day that was enough for me.

**And that was for school?**

But I never went to Perth as such, I went to Mt Lawley to school. In those days to catch the Kalamunda bus or the Kostera bus, I generally finished up I was hanging out the door of the bus because it was absolutely packed. People were standing in the aisle and everything and I'd be hanging outside the door. They wouldn't allow that today but in those days they did. No; I don't think mum went to Perth much at all. There was no need really.

**So with the buses going down to Perth being so packed, was it because there wasn't very many buses?**

Kostera's had about twenty (20) buses and I always remember when I was going to school, old Cecil Kostera, old Cecil was the original owner, the man who originated it he, pardon me. He bought a nice new bus, big Leyland bus, and it was the first bus in Western Australia to have the driver sitting in front of the front wheels, always behind before that. It was number seventeen (17), Kala Kostera's number seventeen (17) and that [had] a pre-selection gear box on it too. It only had a little gear box. You could change gears before you were ready for it, no clutch, you know, only a little knob on the dash. We young people thought that was something pretty good. They even had it at the Royal Show first and later on it went to the Metro Bus

Company in Belmont. Kalamunda, I think they probably sold out to the Metropolitan Transport Trust if you like. Now old Ces Kostera had three (3) boys: Geoff, Jack and Bob. Geoff died, Bob wasn't well and eventually died but Jack Kostera was the one who managed the bus company and then he went down and managed the Metropolitan Transport Trust down in Belmont. He used to live opposite the Shire office, I'm talking about the old Shire office, in what would be about 40 Canning Road. [Originally Kalamunda was controlled by the Darling Range Roads Board but in 1961 the name changed to the Kalamunda Shire Council.]

**Which would have been the Roads Board office.**

It was the Roads Board office and they added on to it. And I can recall even today the little driveway that you go into, I think it's now the Men's Shed next to the old buildings which went to the police station and even that's gone now, there was a horse trough with a hitching rail, and I can still remember that. On the left hand side as you go in towards the shed on the eastern side of Canning Road was this horse trough with a hitching rail. Mind you, that would be in the '40s I suppose I can remember that from. Yeah, I can still remember that up here.

**There was a bit of a crossover between when cars were introduced and people still had horses, were using horses in Kalamunda?**

Oh, yeah. I can remember when I first started of a Saturday morning delivering bread; I used to go helping delivering bread that was always with a horse and cart. I also got a job part-time when I was still going to school, delivering milk. And that was of a night-time and that was a horse and cart.

(35:02)

Where the swimming pool now is I can recall that used to be a wood yard and there was a horse and cart with very big wheels on the cart and a very big horse too, and he used to cut wood there; and that was all done with a horse and cart. Mind you, that would've been, oh, well, I was going to school so it would've been in the late '40s. Yeah; it'd be the late 40s. I was ten (10); that would've been 1949 so '49, '50 I suppose I can still remember that, but then they phased it out and they got cars after that. Kalamunda buses, I mean, they were the old buses and some of them were really old buses. I can recall it would've been about 1956. I went to school in '51, '52, '53 and it could've been during that time coming up Kalamunda hill and or even Lesmurdie hill, you'd get halfway up and they'd say, 'right, everybody out', and you'd get out until the bus crawled over the hill. And we used to call it, we call it Dog Hill, I don't know whether you know it called Dog Hill, but the first part of Kalamunda Hill from the bottom which is Watsonia Road up to the top of the hill which is Hillside Crescent, that's called Dog Hill. The old residents used to call it Dog Hill, and you would wait until it come over the top of that bit and then everybody'd get back in the bus again, because it just could not take it (laughs). I don't know what people would think about it if you did decide to do that these days (laughs), 'hang on, hang on you can't do that', but that's what we did.

**Do you know why that bit of the hill was called Dog Hill?**

No idea. Everybody just, possibly because it's in a dog's leg, maybe, because it's (rustling papers) from the service station it sort of comes up like that. You've got Watsonia Road here and Hillside there so maybe that part's called the dog leg, I don't know. It's a bit of a bend but that's the hilly bit just there but everybody knew it as Dog Hill.

**Ok. That's very interesting.**

They wouldn't now but in my day you talk about Dog Hill, everyone knew where you were talking about.

**Now before you mentioned that you met your wife at the Young Farmers.**

Junior Farmers.

**Junior Farmers, sorry. What's her name?**

Margaret. Her name was Margaret Backhouse and her parents started a business in 1956. They came up here in 1956 and directly opposite Central Road next to Stove's Butchers. And I think it might be a book store now, they started what is called Hastings Emporium. Now that was a very big store because it went from the butcher's shop through to the chemist shop, and there's currently I think about three (3) businesses there now. But it was all one and it was a big drapery store and it was Hastings Emporium they called it. They called it Hastings because Hastings was the name of the ship that mum's father came out from England on. So it was called Hastings Emporium. Mr Backhouse and Beresford, that's Margaret's uncle, the two (2) of them brother in law's, went together and started the business up and they had about, oh, I don't know six (6) staff. Margaret worked in there; mum and dad Backhouse and mum and dad Beresford and a couple of other ladies and Margaret all worked in the shop. So I mean it was a very good, fairly profitable business in those days. Yes; I met Margaret in the Junior Farmers but in 1956 they started off; they came up and started their business. I think that Hastings closed down, oh, dad sold out and I don't know when that'd be. It would've been, oh, pardon me, I don't know; early 70s I suppose. No, later than that, I can't recall when it finished. Then Hastings, the chappie who bought it cut it in half and then he moved Hastings, the store, up the road a bit further out towards the top of the hill but it was only a shadow of its former self. It was a big store originally.

(40:02)

**Yeah; I remember going into that store. I thought it was a pretty big store then so I can't imagine it being much, much bigger.**

Yeah; it was a big store.

**Did you have any children?**

Two (2) kids. Yeah; we've got two (2) kids, Geoffrey and Sandra. My son Geoff is in the courier game. He likes to be in the courier, he likes driving and whatever and he lives up in Joondalup. He's got two (2) daughters which are my granddaughters of course. And my daughter, Sandra, she lives at The Vines. She's in a very high position in a mining company and so is her husband and they've got a lovely property on an acre of land at The Vines. Swimming pool and kangaroos in their backyard and emus and ducks and tiger snakes; lots of tiger snakes.

**You could do without them.**

Oh, I went up there to look after their place one day and there's a damn big tiger snake on the front lawn, because the brook, the creek is about, oh, a bit more from there to the back fence (indicates outside). It's only about sixty (60) metres from their back door. Yeah; where there's water there's snakes.

**Ok. Who were some of the local identities of the area?**

Local identities, in those days?

**Yep. Growing up and in your adult life, because I'm sure they've probably changed over time.**

Oh, they've changed alright. Let me say, the local identities in Kalamunda. Now I'm going back around 1950. I can give you the businesses and the names of the person running the business.

**Ok.**

Kalamunda Post Office is right at the top. The Postmaster in those days was, oh, dear, I wrote it down somewhere. Anyway, was Vic Zapper. That's starting at the top now then coming down Railway Road you've got Bavistock and Orrel's Butcher's shop, that's next to the hotel. You had Hawley's Shoe Store which Bob Hawley, Bob and Roma started that and the Hawley's Shoe Store as we know it now is down next to the Post Office in, what's the name of the street? Down the bottom of that part of the hill anyway.

**Barber?**

Barber Street. Barber Street; correct. Slatyer's Estate Agency, Hugh Slatyer. Now that was where the library is now but closer to Railway Road and it was only a very tiny building. The library that was the railway yard and everything over there, railway lines and everything. Dick Marshall the barber now he was next to Hawley's; this is all under the main roof of the Kalamunda Hotel. Freda Woods' dress shop was called Julie Anne and that is next door to, in Railway Road next door to. What's the name of the shop there on the corner? The Thai on the Hill. Next to what is now the Thai on the Hill, that was called Julie Anne. Kalamunda Hotel of course, Thompson's Store was on the corner, Roy Thompson. That was on the corner of Haynes Street. Vermulen Jewellers, Mr Vermulen, that was right next to Thompson's Store. The Commonwealth Bank was in a little one room, ten (10) by ten (10) room next door to Vermulen's which was directly opposite the bowsters of Kostera's in Haynes Street. Keith Gillespie had the chemist shop and that was in Haynes Street which is still a chemist shop, but there's different people there now. Hastings Emporium, just going down Haynes Street run by Mr Jim Backhouse and Arthur Beresford. Stove's butcher shop, Milton Stove and that was directly opposite Central Road. Mrs Finlay's pie shop was next door. Edwardine was next door to that; and that's the shop I couldn't remember a little while ago. Edwardine was next door to Mrs Finlay's shop. We had Steere's Newsagency, Bob Steere was directly opposite, Ken Steere and Bob Steere. Ken Steere was the dad; Bob Steere was the son.

(45:01)

That was on the corner of Central Road which is now the Commonwealth Bank. Kay's Kash and Karry is further down Haynes Street. That was run by Len Bennett and he also had the tennis courts. Kookaburra Tea Rooms, I have no idea who ran Kookaburra Tea Rooms but that's where all the young people met. Crabb's corner store, Jimmy Crabb and Ailsa Crabb. I went to school with Ailsa, the daughter, but that was on the corner of Heath Road. It's now the opposite corner on the northern side and is now IGA. Union Stores were also down the foot of Haynes Street and that was just at the back of the Kookaburra Tea Rooms. So that's all of the main people. Other than that it was houses in Haynes Street; now it's banks.

**So other than business owners, were there any other people that were prominent in the local area?**

Other than the business?

**Yeah; other than business owners.**

Kalamunda Transport of course, yeah, Gordon Farrell. He was in Heath Road. Yes; we had Wally Martin was a builder. We had; oh, I'm trying to think of the milkman's name. Ted Kennedy was the milkman, he lives in Heath Road. We had George Lane was another builder; he lived in Recreation Road. That's two (2) builders. We really didn't have many builders in Kalamunda and there was always, houses were not built in brick in those days, very rarely. You had to have a stonemason to build, you know; it was all done with timber. Other than businesses, what else did we have? We didn't have much as far as politicians. I mean (rustling of papers) I don't think anybody knew politicians much. We had Ray Owen was the Shire President I think he was. That's in the Shire, the old offices.

**You mentioned Dr Barber. When did any other doctors come to Kalamunda?**

Well Dr Barber was there. He was, ever since I can remember he was on the corner of Central Road then we got Dr Leciezio and Dr Jamieson [about 1956/57] they were in Canning Road at the very foot of Mead Street, which is now houses, but they were in a converted house. Dr Jamieson was a marvellous man because he came out from Africa and he treated Haile Selassie which was then the Emperor of Ethiopia. And he used to tell us stories about that; so those two (2). And then they moved up to what is now Mead Medical. They started Mead Medical. Now of course there are about eight (8) or ten (10) doctors in Mead Medical and not only that, Mead Medical now has a branch in Forrestfield. Also there's another doctors' surgery down Canning Road but doctors were in short supply in those days.

**So you had to go to Midland, like you mentioned before, to go to see a doctor if there was any emergency or anything like that?**

Well in emergencies, Kalamunda had its own ambulance [run by volunteers]. We've had that there for a long time. Jim and Marion Dixon used to look after the ambulance, and I've written that down somewhere. I'm just going from the top of my head now. Jim and Marion Dixon used to look after the ambulance and they were on call most of the time. My mother and father were also on call as were Ted and Kath Robinson and Wally Martin and Nell Martin. Primarily I think that was the group. My dad was in the St John's Ambulance for a long time, as was my mother, and my dad finished up getting a life membership from St John's Ambulance. That was in 1959 my father was awarded life membership for his services to the community.

(50:01)

But if an ambulance was required, they would ring up and whoever was on call would grab the ambulance and the ambulance was in, Kostera's used to maintain it and they used to service it and everything. Mrs Dixon used to look after it and she was on the corner of Central Road and Mead Street which is now Coles, there was only just the house on the very corner there. It used to be in the ambulance hall. I got married in a church in Central Road in 1960 which is now KADS [Kalamunda Dramatic Society] Theatre and it went from, just after I got married I think the roof must've fallen in or something but I don't know whether there were any more marriages after that or that it even continued as a church because it went to KADS Theatre. They put like a lean to on the side of it for the ambulance and it went to the ambulance hall before the KADS Theatre and my parents used to drive the

ambulance and often you had to go to Perth, or St John of God's in Belmont which is no more. St John of God's in Belmont used to be next to the Sandringham Hotel; that was the closest hospital. Midland doctors, yes; but the hospital mostly went down to there.

**So it really was quite isolated from other places.**

Kalamunda was fairly isolated; in particular as far as doctors were concerned. You got injured you were in trouble. That went on for quite a while but, yeah, you had to go to Perth rarely. I suppose you could get to Midland but there was only doctors in Midland. You had to go down to the hospital in Belmont (looking at papers). Yeah, I got the ambulance, I've done that.

Mr Macaboy, yeah that's right; he was the Manager of the Commonwealth Bank in Kalamunda in 1960. In 1960 I got a Commonwealth Bank loan to build this house. People have said to me, 'how the devil did you get a Commonwealth Bank loan, because they don't loan'. And it was only because of my father, he knew the bank manager, and my wife's parents, Jim Backhouse, he knew the bank manager and I think that's about the only reason I got it. I got very, very friendly with, a mate of mine who, was a Commonwealth Bank Manager up there and he used to say to me, 'how the hell did you ever get a loan through the Commonwealth Bank because we don't lend'. In those days they didn't give loans out. Anyway I got a loan; so that was most unusual. That was only in a tiny little office at the top of Haynes Street in those days. I did mention that Kalamunda had no water and that was back in the 50s. You had to get it from Kalamunda Transport. In the 50s they put a pipeline from Mundaring Weir to Kalamunda but that didn't last long. It appeared, I don't know how big it was, but it was only probably two hundred millimetres (200mm) or something of that size, but then they put it where it is now out at the Victoria Reservoir, out in I suppose it's called Bickley, Carmel, Bickley out there, straight down Canning Road, Victoria Reservoir. Now Victoria Reservoir was the first weir to be constructed in Western Australia. That weir, or reservoir, serviced Perth back in the 1890s or something. That was built to service Perth with their water and then it wasn't big enough for Perth so they cut that off and Kalamunda now draws its water from Victoria Reservoir which was, as I said, was the first constructed in Western Australia to service Perth. Now it services Kalamunda and we've got a big pipeline.

As a young bloke; I'm going over things that I should've mentioned early on possibly but I was in the boy cubs of course and then I went into the Boy Scouts and the Scout Hall, Cub Hall is still the same hall next to Toyota, Kalamunda Toyota in Canning Road.

(55:05)

That was the Scout Hall and that was built, crikey, I don't know, 1945 or something like that because I was only very young when I went into the Boy Cubs, then the Boy Scouts and Pat Hallahan was the man in charge. He was the Scout Master in those days and poor old Pat, he's still around. He's up in the, what do they call it up there, the museum.

**The Historical Society.**

Yeah. The Historical Society. He's, well, he was the President of that for a long time but he's getting a bit older now. He's still there anyway. I've also mentioned the Kalamunda Tennis Club. I might as well just mention that anyway, about the Kalamunda Tennis Club. I did say to you before that it started in Len Bennett's tennis courts to the foot of Haynes Street where Liquorland is now; that's where the two (2) tennis courts were. They were gravel and then Len Bennett bituminised them

for us and he used to rent them out. From there the Kalamunda Tennis Club moved to Recreation Road at the back of the oval. I think it's now the Lapidary Club. There's two (2), I think we put down four (4) and it was all voluntary; all the tennis club people put them down and the Shire provided the bitumen, put down the four (4) courts there. In time, they moved over to the Kalamunda Club where it's in Stirk Park and I think we might've got six (6) tennis courts there and of course they were all bitumen. Then I got involved with the club in 1975; Mr Whitlam came into power in 1975 and the Whitlam Government provided grants. I think they used to call it the RED Scheme, Regional something Development' whatever it was but it was the RED [Regional Employment Development] Scheme. And ten (10) courts were made available next to the Kalamunda Shire in Railway Road for the Kalamunda Tennis Club. I was firmly involved from then on, right through and because I was President for I think seven (7) consecutive years, but a member for a long, long time. I got a life membership there from the Kalamunda Tennis Club; and I don't know what time I got that, 1980 or something. But I think Kalamunda's a beautiful place to live. I wouldn't live anywhere else.

**Now you mentioned the train before.**

The?

**The train.**

The train, yes.

**The train being in operation. So after they got decommissioned what was that land used for at the top of, along Railway Road?**

Before you get on to that, the train, I can remember coming up in the train and I can remember after school on a number of occasions going up to the train station, meeting the drivers, getting in the engine with them and I would shovel coal going out to Pickering Brook and Karragullen. When the train got to Karragullen they would disconnect the engine, we'd go on to a turntable, we would manually push this turntable round so the engine went back to Kalamunda and it drove them back to Kalamunda. After the train stopped, well, I suppose for years nothing happened and then they eventually took the line up, and it was used just for people to exercise horses. We used to exercise our horses on and go out to Bickley, whatever, taking horses out there because it was a nice wide track. It is still used today, the zigzag is still used today, in one way location going down so that you can drive down it. It's a beautiful sight especially at night time. I have on a number of occasions in my car taken friends who have come here from the Eastern States, put them in the car, taken them for a ride down Bickley Valley, come back to Kalamunda and gone down the zigzag and they reckon that was a beautiful drive; and it is a lovely drive.

(1:00:04)

No; it's not used for anything. The Kalamunda tennis courts sit right in the middle of it. The Kalamunda Shire [office] has been built over the top of it. In part, it's a road down from Bickley so it's, you know, not used for anything. As I've said parts of it they've now sealed and out in Bickley or Carmel way they've made into a road but you can still see where the lines used to be.

**So with the station buildings, I know they're still there at the moment, would they have been used for anything else?**

No; it was never used. As far as I can recall it went from the railway to the Historical Society.

**Ok.**

No; never used for anything I don't think. I don't think so; not that I can recall anyway. It's always been kept the same as it was but I can still remember the train line, the station. You've got Haynes Street over here and where the library is now, was a big, four (4) big pillars standing up with a whacking great big tank on the top with water to fill the train engine up with, you know. But no; they've fortunately kept the railway station as it was and they preserved a little bit of railway line and kept the engine there, so I'm glad they did that.

**I'm not sure whether you said. Did you say what year the train line stopped running?**

It's in the book up there but, no; I didn't look that up (laughs). No. When it did stop running they left the lines down for a few years and it took a few years before they actually came along and took the lines and the sleepers up, but I couldn't tell you what year that was now. It'd have to have been, oh, '49, '50. I would say around about 1950 – '49, '50, '51 because several things happened at that time. We got water in Kalamunda just after that [in 1954]. Unfortunately the train stopped, which I think was a terrible thing. They've stopped trains all around the countryside and put in buses which I think is not the same, you know. I like the old Puffing Billy even though, you know, the carbon footprint and all that (laughs) now; but I still like the old Puffing Billy.

I can remember wages in those days. I started in 1953 in Kalamunda Post Office on a three hundred and thirty nine (£339) per annum salary. That was pounds; three hundred and thirty nine pounds (£339). I haven't got my calculator, I don't know how much that is a fortnight but a number of my friends were apprentices, doing apprenticeships and I was getting a lot more money than they were. Money was pretty light on in those days.

**Now you've mentioned the ambulance. So were there any other community groups or organisations that you or your family were involved with, including sports groups?**

The ambulance was my parents primarily and dad got a life membership for. I was in the Fire Brigade. I started with another five (5) and I think there was half a dozen that started the Volunteer Fire Brigade in Kalamunda. Tennis clubs, cricket clubs and football clubs, I was always a player not a, oh, no, I was a manager of the under sixteens (16s) when my son grew up and he was a footballer. I was the manager of the football club. I can recall I had a Holden station wagon and to my annoyance a lot of the parents would bring their kids along. I'd meet everyone up at the oval for instance, we might've had to go down to Redcliffe to play and I would take my car with all the uniforms in the back and the footballs and I'd have eight (8) or ten (10) kids in my car which you're not allowed to do now because the parents wouldn't take them and they'd bundle them [in].

(1:05:14)

I got very annoyed with that because I used to have to look after the jumpers, which we used to wash in those days. And I used to look after the medical side because I worked with the St John's Ambulance and I got my ticket and everything to patch people up, the kids up; and I was the manager of the under sixteens (16s). I've been involved in a lot of things.

**Ok. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area?**



Well, I don't know. I've lived here all my life that I can recall, not all my life. I was born in '39 in Katanning and came to Kalamunda in 1942. I can't remember much before 1942 so. Kalamunda. I've made a lot of friends in Kalamunda. I've been on a number of committees in Kalamunda, tennis clubs and golf. My wife and I are both in golf and I've been President of the golf for a number of years. There are very nice people in Kalamunda I find. We don't have the Northbridge attitude if you like where there's. I mean I live in a fairly quiet street, we don't have any problems at all. Having said that, they've just put blooming speed humps down in Orange Valley Road to stop the hoons which I wasn't impressed with. I like the area. I don't think I could live down the foot of the hill, I like the top of the hill. I always tell my kids to live on the top of the hill. No; I just like the area. I like the outer urban part of it, I don't like high rise stuff; I couldn't live there. I'm not saying there's high rise down the foot of the hill but there is closer in, but I like that that old song saying, you know, "Don't fence me in."

**Excellent. So is there anything else that you'd like to mention that you haven't mentioned earlier? Anything else you can recall?**

Yeah. If I had my time over again and had a few bob behind me I would've bought a bit more property in Kalamunda (laughs) because it's worth a lot of money these days. When anybody gets married, if you're average like me, you put all your money into your own house. I could have mortgaged my house and bought other properties but I couldn't do that. I could never, in the event that fell over I'd lose my house. I could never do that to my wife and kids so I've never done and we're comfortable. I like living here. We built this house in 1963, we're still in it. My son and friends of ours they've got big gaps and cracks in their roofs and everything; I don't have too many cracks in mine. Mine's pretty solid built. I like the area, I feed the birds at the back here. I've got lots of birds come, in particular at lunch time they seem to (laughs) get up there. I've got bandicoots in the backyard that dig holes in the lawn. You can see those little patches in the back lawn, they come along and dig little holes. But you can put a fruit tree in your backyard whereas in an inner urban area you couldn't have fruit trees. No; I like it here. No; I like Kalamunda.

**Ok. Well thank you very much. I'll stop the interview.**

If I think of anything else I'll tell you.

**Ok.**

Interview ends 1hour 9 minutes



Neil's first car 1934 Austin, 1956



Neil and Jim's cars 1956

**Oral History interview**

**Elaine Sargent**

**Interview date: 16 March 2012**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Elaine Sargent for my Curtin University thesis project, the role of oral history to interpret a place. I'll just start with your name.**

Hello. As Alethea said, I am Elaine Sargent and I'll just tell you a little bit about my life and growing up in Kalamunda, back in the 'olden' days. I was born during the Second World War in Wiluna, which is on the edge of the Gibson Desert, and it was a very thriving gold mining town at the time but during the mid '40s, dad started buying up blocks of land in Kalamunda and re-erecting little goldfields homes on them. There's still a few around actually and in 1947 we all moved down to Kalamunda, and I'm old enough where I can remember riding on the Zig-Zag railway. It was quite good fun actually. What I mostly remember as a little child, is seeing all the beautiful wildflowers everywhere. I don't know which part is the 'Zig' and which is the 'Zag' but the train would go one way [and then back up]. If we wanted to, we could hop out and pick flowers [while it would be going] back the other way, and when it came back we'd just get back on it with our bunches of flowers. But it closed down probably by the time I started school, [at] Kalamunda Primary.

My [childhood, growing up in Kalamunda], was not too different from that of my parents, but probably not as hard as they had it. [Like my friends' parents, they had] lived through two world wars and a depression so people of that generation were mostly [hard up. War is a great equalizer.] Those of us who came out of the Second World War were brought up with hand-me-downs, and we made do with what we had, and we never threw a thing out; we always saved everything for a rainy day. Every button got taken off your clothing before it was discarded; every zipper. Mum would unravel the jumpers, wash the wool and knit it up again. My parents had to work very hard for every penny, so they brought us up with a good work ethic. If you wanted to buy something, you saved up for it or you went without it. Can you imagine growing up without TV, telephones or mobile phones? This was before sliced bread, glad wrap, frozen veggies, dishwashers, fridge-freezers, Tupperware containers, steam irons, twin-tub automatic washing machines, packet cake mixes, frozen pies, pasties and all that stuff. All the things that are taken for granted these days, we had to do without but we didn't miss it.

In Kalamunda, before the scheme water was put through we relied solely on our rainwater, and not a drop was wasted. [We had a bore with a windmill and two large galvanized tanks to catch the water from the roofs.] Now this might sound terrible to you people who probably bathe about twice a day in the hot weather, we bathed once a week, every single one of us [I knew]. All the bath water was bailed out onto the garden when it was cold. We all used the same bath water (laughs), with the cleanest one in first and then each person had a top up from the copper in the wash house, which was always separate from the house and it wasn't called a laundry in those days. Every extra bucket was carried down the path to the bathroom, and topped up. I was always allowed to have the first bath and my brother always had the last one because he was always the grubbiest, but mum always used to say, 'never mind, you've got the most water'. Everyone had big [half acre] blocks; they kept chooks and grew some vegetables, all with the left over rainwater [and chicken manure]. We never had [had water to spare so you would never leave a tap running]. You had your basin, you had the water in it and you just didn't brush your teeth under a [running tap, you used a cup]. You just couldn't waste [it]. Most of us had fruit trees in the backyard and everyone had at least one lemon tree, [all watered with grey water]. The milk and bread was delivered by horse and cart [and ladled from a churn into a billy]. When pasteurised milk came on the scene, the milk came in bottles [in a van], but the baker still delivered the bread with a horse and

cart. The [bakery we used] in those days was the Portwine's and they had their bakery up where Barberry Square is now. And Lyall used to have this lovely big Clydesdale horse [named Ginger] to pull the cart, [and when he got down to put the bread in a customer's bread bin Ginger would amble up to the next driveway and wait 'til he caught up with it and so on]. He always had this lovely Red Setter running alongside [the cart as well]. You know, why get a van when you still have a healthy draught horse in the stable? They had stables behind the bakery. It was quite safe in those days to leave out the milk and bread money because no-one would've thought of stealing it. The greengrocer, [Dave Underwood], called round twice a week, in his truck to all the homes, so fresh veggies were always available. Our grocery order was put into the shop, to Crabb's, [which in those days, was on the opposite corner from where it is now], by we kids on our way to school. We just stuck it under the door and Pat Hallahan used to deliver the goods to our home later that day. He was a student teacher at the time. Our mum, [like most other mums], stayed at home minding the kids, and was always there when we came home from school. Very few women drove cars then and only people with businesses had telephones installed.

(5:01)

I'll tell you a bit about what the day-to-day life was for mum and all the rest. We didn't have fences as such, we had [post and] wire fences so your neighbours [could see into each other's yards]. Everyone washed on a Monday, [as was the custom], and so when the mums were hanging out the clothes [up the back], they always had a yak [across the back yard fence] to each other and they all knew what [the latest] gossip was going [on and] it was always passed around (laughs). There were specific days for women to do the housework because with no mod cons, tasks took a very long time to perform. So Monday was always washing day, as I said, and people had long lines stretching across the backyards from tree to tree and these were held up by long wooden props. We'd get these itinerant swaggies coming round looking for a bit of money and they'd cut bush poles [with a little fork in the top from the nearby] bush, and come round and sell them. Sometimes they'd sharpen knives for us. But in the 50s the rotary hoist was invented, so a lot of people changed over to them. We thought we were coming up in the world when dad got us a rotary hoist. Mum [still used the long lines] though for hanging the sheets on. She'd sort out the washing into the whites and the coloureds and she'd mix up a [big] bowl of starch, by hand and all that. She'd fill the copper with water and grate a [cake] of Peak soap into it and then she'd light the fire. [First] all the sheets and the whites went in, and when the water boiled, she'd boil them for three (3) minutes. Then with an old broom handle, which we called a pot stick, she'd lift the clothes out and put them on a wooden box, and that drained the water back into the copper. The water level was then topped up from the troughs and the next lot of washing was put in. [The drained] clothes were put into the first concrete trough [for the first rinse], then mum used to put them through a hand wringer and they went to the next trough, and mum [would swish this blue solid chalky stuff wrapped in little cotton bags] called Reckitt's Blue into it. That was used for everything: bee stings, anything like that, [but its purpose was mainly for washing and] was just an optical illusion to make the clothes seem whiter. All the tablecloths, skirts, shirts, blouses, hankies and doilies were then put into a mixture of starch. All the housewives seemed to turn up [to their lines with their baskets of washing] at the same time and chatter. Everyone knew everything about everyone else and I used to hate that actually.

**Ok.**

Tuesdays were for ironing, and the dried washing was dampened down [by putting a few items together, flicking warm water over them and then rolling them] up for the next day's [ironing]. I could never understand why they just didn't take them off the line damp but that wasn't done. There were no steam irons then so that was the

best way to get the wrinkles out, and there were no drip dry materials [so] ironing took ages, but there were mum's radio serials [to break the monotony while Mum did the ironing on the table with an old blanket and a sheet on top]. One of mum's favourites was on the ABC and was called *Blue Hills* by Gwen Meredith. The others were *Portia Faces Life* and *Dr Paul*. And I remember the girl in *Dr Paul* probably spent about three (3) years being pregnant with her first baby, because it used to go on and on. But, you know, it sounds corny but the soapiers of today are just as bad; and there was no telly then anyway.

Now, we had no septic toilets in those days. People had a dunny (lavatory) up the back yard [covered in Dolicos vine] and probably there might be some relics of these still in people's backyards, used for tool sheds. The dunny man, his name was Mr Dacre, [and he had the most important business in town we all reckoned]. He emptied the pans each week [from the back lanes] and when the washing was done, mum used to take some of the boiling [soapy] water and scour the seat and the floor of the lavatory and put some of the wood ash from the fire into the pan. [She used Phenyle as a disinfectant and I remember that I disliked the carbolic smell.]

Now, Wednesdays were cleaning days. Mum'd [put a scarf on her head, and then she'd] take the broom and sweep the walls and ceilings and she'd wipe all the shelves, defrost the fridge. You had to do the fridge once a week because if you didn't, you'd get a big build up of ice in it. There was no such thing as self-defrosting fridges. If you didn't [defrost it], all the ice would build up around the walls. There were no freezer compartments, just one little spot that would fit an ice block tray. So she'd take the bottom drawer from the wood stove and rake the ashes out and put them on the compost heap in the garden, and the top of the stove was then painted with stuff called Stove Black and she'd paint the front with another tin of stuff called Silver Frost. Later on we got a Metters with an enamel front and we didn't have to paint it, we only had to do the [stove] top. We had floor rugs, we didn't have carpets. Mum would put the floor rugs over the big lines and beat them to get the dust out. [We used to help]. Some families had carpets but we didn't, we had polished floor boards. The house always smelled nice when we came home from school with all the [O'Cedar] polish mum had used. Our kitchen table was pine and mum would scrub it with lemon juice and salt. Later, dad nailed some lino on it then it just needed a wipe over. We had no kitchen sink in those days. The washing up was done in a big wash basin on the wooden kitchen table [with a cake of washing soap in a mesh container swished around and the washed] dishes were placed on a tray and dried up. We didn't rinse them in those days, unthinkable but we all survived.

Thursday was baking day. Mum would make her own pastry, make a whole lot of pasties for us to take to school and these would keep well in the fridge. She'd bake cakes and other things to last the week and always had some extras on hand in case of rellies visiting on Sundays. They'd travel up from the city by bus and walk the couple of miles from town.

Fridays were for going to the city or just shopping days, or getting involved with community activities: these coincided with [Mum's] CWA meetings. In the city on Fridays, Boans, the big family store, used to have a place where all the housewives used to gather for *Housewives' Choice* which was broadcast over the radio.

(10:09)

It was pretty funny really; I can remember it well into the 60s. All the ladies, unknown to each other, sang the latest hit parade songs. They had a good get-together after the shopping trip to the city and they sounded so off key, but I used to love listening to it at home if I happened to be there. Then they all went [up to the top floor in the lift] to Boans Cafeteria for a cheap lunch.

Saturday was just the usual jobs. Everyone had jobs to do; [wood chopping, raking, weeding the veggie patch, polishing silver]. Mum used to strip all the beds and put clean sheets on them with lovely starched pillow slips. It was also hair washing day. We had our baths Saturday nights and loved getting into clean pajamas and clean sheets. This is just taken for granted these days. Saturday [afternoons], we were sometimes allowed to attend the matinee at the Agricultural Hall and the films were mostly Westerns. Some kids went every week but we only went about half a dozen times a year, if that. If there was a really good film on, mum would take us on the Saturday night to see such films as *Showboat* or *Annie Get Your Gun*.

Sunday, we kids always went to Sunday School [and wore] our best clothes; that was just tradition. This was always Sunday roast day and we loved coming home to a roast dinner. We always sat down at the table to eat with a nice starched tablecloth and serviettes. There were no paper serviettes then. We had our own particular places to sit, and dad always sat at the head of the table because he carved the roast; and when granddad was staying with us, he would carve the roast. In the afternoon, mum would make sure we all looked respectable in case we had visitors. There being no phones [to let us know], the relatives would catch the bus up from Perth to visit us, in the bush as it was then. My dad had made a cricket pitch on the spare block next door, [which] we owned. We children and the men would play cricket while the aunties would chat on the verandah, before we all went in for the lavish afternoon tea. Sometimes I'd take my cousins for a walk in the bush with [my] animals. They were always a bit nervous as they were city kids. Sunday evening we usually went to church again. On the way home we'd walk [down Mead Street] past the bakery and mum would pick up a fresh loaf of bread, straight from the oven, for our lunches the next day. The smell of the bread from Portwine's Bakery wafted all over the town. [looking through papers] That's it. Oh, I'll talk about school.

**Ok.**

I started school, and my teacher was named Barbara Genoni [who took over from Miss Wells, who taught my brother]. She became Barbara Pergotto later on, and I think we were her first class because she was pretty strict with us. In those days, if you didn't stand in line straight, you got rapped on the legs with a ruler, or you didn't hold your pencil straight, you got rapped on the knuckles; but that was just normal. [We liked our teachers mostly.] Our school, Kalamunda School, had two (2) single classrooms. [In one] there was [the infants (Bubs) and first grade] which is 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade [today]; [2<sup>nd</sup> and 3rd standards (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th grades) were in the other single classroom and taught by Mrs Eaton, whose son Terry was a monitor in our classroom for a while. There was a double classroom which is now at History Village. In one room, 4th and 5th standard (5th and 6th grades) were taught by Mr Stevens. In the second room of the double were 6th and 7th standards, taught first by Mr Millar and later by Chas. Evans and even later, Mr Robinson and Mr Rees, all headmasters. Those two rooms are now at the History Village, the only school building surviving. A couple of years later, one set of prefabs was built and the following year, another room joined to that. The school population grew very quickly with the classes having to be split up. Some 10 to 12 year olds were sent to the Scout Hall to be taught by Neil Earp for two years. Some younger classes went to the Parish Hall in Barber Street and some were taught in the Lesser Hall at the Agricultural Hall. New teachers arrived to take these classes. They were: Mrs Silsbury, Mrs Parkin, Mrs Rose, Mrs Darbyshire, Miss Janine Rose, Mr Laughton and Mr Walker.]

It was a magnificent area for kids, all bush land around us, logs, huge logs. There was an infants' area. We had one big log [root outside our classroom which] we'd slide down; it was worn smooth by all these little bottoms sliding down it [over the years]. We'd climb up behind it and slide down this stump singing a song called 'stacks on the mill, more on still' and push. As one climbed up [the roots] and slid down, the first one would [get] pushed off and have to climb round again, but it was wonderful fun. We had bouncing logs which we'd [sit on] and pretend we were riding horses. [There was one big log where we played statues. We'd jump off the log and freeze into funny positions.] We had a trapeze but my brother's best friend, Don Curry, he fell off the trapeze and broke his arm so the trapeze remained forever out of bounds; but we [still had the] lovely bush [to play in]. We didn't have air-conditioning or anything, we just had a lovely [wood] fire in the winter. [On cold days we would stand against the chimneys outside and warm our hands.] The teachers never did yard duty, they just all stayed in Mrs Eaton's room and they had morning tea, and some of them would smoke and we'd just act the goat and do whatever we liked in the [playground]. There was always bullying but I think that's universal and always will be. We loved Melbourne Cup days because Mr Stevens, one of our teachers, had a car with a radio in it and as soon as the Melbourne Cup came on, all the teachers would run up [outside the school grounds and stand] round the car and listen to the [race] and we'd get extra time for [play], which we loved.

School days [in summer], we had to go [swimming every Friday afternoon]. There was no swimming pool of course up here. We'd [have to] catch a bus down [to learn to] swim at Como. It was full of jellyfish, huge ones, and when the teachers weren't looking, we'd throw them at each other; they were big ones, you know. We just loved [going there]. You could go for 'miles and miles', or for a long way it seemed when we were kids, before you even got out of your depth; a very shallow, safe beach.

(15:09)

Everyone walked to school. It was unheard of to be driven. We walked or rode our bikes and some rode their horses to school. We all took our lunches. We had none of this fancy [bought] stuff. We didn't have a lunch box or drink flasks. We drank from the rainwater tank, and it was usually full of mosquito larvae which we called wriggles but we didn't care about it, we just drank them down. Crazy, but we did; none of us got sick. Our childhood diseases were measles and chickenpox and very rarely, mumps. We would never ever have answered our teachers back either, wouldn't have dared. After school we went to our friends' places without needing to tell our parents but as long as we were home before dark. We'd climb trees, we'd walk in the bush with our dogs, read a lot or just chat to our friends. We always had afternoon tea when we arrived home from school, if we hadn't gone anywhere else. Mum would sometimes, she used to have to feed a few of my friends in the afternoons. If we got up to mischief, our parents would always know about it. You could walk up the street in those days and know every single person. You knew who lived in each house in the town. If you stepped out of line, you were [disciplined]. Our family was always recognised because we kids had bright red hair. From a distance, if they couldn't identify you, they'd know you by your hair (laughs). The whole town used to take on the responsibility of ensuring we kept on the straight and narrow, and I used to think they were all busybodies when I was little. [In] Haynes Street, a lot of people had houses in the main street and in Mead Street. Even until the 70s, yeah, there were still houses in [Haynes] street. It was a nice, very relaxed lifestyle then. I was speaking [before] about Sundays [when] we used to go to [Sunday School]. Where the KADS (Kalamunda Dramatic Society) dramatic hall is, that used to be the St Barnabas [Anglican] Church. There used to be a huge bell, [in Barber] Street, where the town square is [now]. Half an hour before the church [service was due to] start Mr and Mrs Wright, [who] were [also] the school cleaners



[and] who lived in a little house where the Jack Healey Centre is now, [would walk across] and dong the bell, dong, and about ten (10) minutes later you'd just see everyone coming out of their houses, walking to church. [We'd hear the bell] when we were walking from the other direction to the Methodist Church which was up on the corner of Mead and Railway, it's a private home now. We'd always [say], 'oh, it's nearly time, we've got to get there quickly' (laughs). What else would you like me to talk about?

**Well, I just thought, if you could elaborate a little bit about your family, how many siblings you had.**

Ok.

**And where you lived in Kalamunda.**

Do you want to rub that off at all?

**No, no.**

Ok. [We lived at 7 Robins Road in a former goldfields house and the family home is still there.] Well, I just grew up with [my two (2) siblings]; my big sister who is five (5) years older, and now she looks five (5) years younger 'cos she still keeps her hair red (laughs). Well, we're getting old girls now. [My sister won an Eisteddfod for singing when she was only fourteen (14).] My brother was two (2) years older than I and [we] got up to lots of little escapades which perhaps I'd better not tell on the [recorder].

[We used to get up to silly little things.] During the holidays, take the dogs out and we'd go to Lesmurdie Falls for the day. Now Falls Road in those days was [was very natural and] just about deserted. It was [mostly] bush land with a few orchards, [on the left hand side] and that was it. [Sometimes we'd nick some oranges from one of the orchards, even though we had a tree full at home.] We'd walk around all the way down, stay out all day. We didn't really worry about water, we just took a couple of sandwiches and an orange or something, and that was fine. [It was in its natural state back then.] One of the last homes before you get to the Falls, this is before they put parking areas and bridges and paths in, there was a house on the right and our local doctor lived there. There were two (2) doctors [in town]: they were Dr Barber and Dr Thornton. Dr Thornton had six (6) children, all taught by correspondence, but his wife, Mrs Thornton, a rather well built lady, ran the local ballet school called the Molly De Wit School [of Dance]. And mum decided to turn me into a lady because I was always barefoot and up a tree, she sent my sister and I to dancing classes. Well, my sister really reveled in it but I was like a little baby elephant stomping around. We were the Mayflowers, and we did a few lovely little concerts in Kalamunda; and the Thornton's are still in the theatre. You often hear of John Thornton, but there were six (6) of them; they were very [talented]. Dr Thornton, the first person I [knew who had a] station wagon, it was a sort of made of wood.

**Ok.**

Wood panelled station wagon; they were called ranch wagons then. That was the first one I remember [seeing].

(20:01)

I belonged to the first Brownie pack and [our] Brown Owl was Glen Miller, [who lived in Schmitt Road]. She was lovely [to us]. We loved being Brownies and we learnt

how to make knots and all the usual thing, and do our badges. It was just a [happy] lifestyle. Then we went up to Guides and we were donated some land called Paxwold so on Saturdays we'd have busy bees [and we'd ride out there on our bikes] and clear [all these trees and shrubs], which was a terrible thing to do [really], and have camps there. And all these years later, fifty (50) years later or fifty five (55) years later, I work at Paxwold as a volunteer for Kanyana and I do the gardens; so it's come around full circle because I'm very much a conservationist and wouldn't cut down a tree. Every block was a treed block. Where the Kalamunda High School is, was the most magnificent patch of bush [and large trees] there, where we kids used to ride our bikes through [a little track]. What else would you like me to say? We didn't have a swimming pool. We had a little model of a potential swimming pool [erected] across the road from the Uniting Church at Kel (Kelvin) Higgs' Garage that was on the corner of [Mead Street] and Railway Road. [It was] a little model of what [the future] swimming pool would be [like with] a money box so you could put donations in, and strangely enough no one ever robbed it, you know. We eventually got the swimming pool [but it was never built in time for us]. Kel Higgs got drowned at sea on a fishing trip in the early 60s, I think it was; so we got the swimming pool but we only got it in time for my own children. We never had the chance to enjoy it. The Shire offices [used to be] on Canning Road (now Dome cafe), which became the RTA [Road Traffic Authority] then became the Police Depot for a while. There was only one little building and then they had another one built on to match it; [it was called the Roads Board then]. Next to it they had a big Moreton Bay Fig tree with a lovely horse trough made out of the big carved log of wood [underneath it]. We'd take to dogs; you always took your dogs into town and the dogs would come but they always had a bath in the horse trough on the way home. Where the ANZ Bank is in Kalamunda was all bush land [with] a cleared bit [in the centre] and every year the [*Kitty Gill*] rodeo would come to town and they'd have their horses [donkeys and the camel, tethered on the block where IGA now stands].

(25:00)

After school – this is the most amazing thing, they would let we children take a horse each and take it up to the horse trough and have a drink and take it back again, but nowadays you couldn't do anything like that in case of accidents but it didn't seem to happen [back then]. I had to drag this little three (3) month colt [named Junior] up and it didn't want to go. It was putting its brakes on all the time and I dragged it, and dragged it and got it there. It was glaring at me, this darling little thing, wouldn't drink so I pushed its muzzle in (laughs). I was only a kid about [eleven (11) or] twelve (12), pushed its muzzle in and it closed its little mouth so no water could get in. I remember, I think it was granddad said to me, 'you can take a horse to water but you can't make it drink', and I thought, 'how true'. So I had to lead this naughty little colt back. [They] had a camel, which they let us [sit] on too.

The Kostera Oval used to just be called the Recreation Ground and that had a picket fence around it. On show days they had a gymkhana once a year and the Kalamunda Show; but my brother and I were very naughty, we didn't want to spend money going in so we'd sneak around the back where there was a bit of fence broken and we'd get in that way and spend that money at the Show. [It was a] terrible thing to do, but mum's not here to know all about these little escapades.

You know Stirk Cottage? Well, where the high school [oval] is now, there used to be another [similar house], like a little adobe house. It was in much better repair than Stirk Cottage and the Costello's lived in there. I think they just paid a peppercorn rent [for the house and the huge paddock]. Stirk Cottage itself was lived in by the Wilkes' [back then] and where the bowling club is, that was actually a house; [one of] the Halse [families] used to live in that house but I think they built the bowling club around it. [The park was a dairy then, with cows and long kikuyu grass in the

paddock]. But in the 60s, we didn't have a Historical Society at the time, it was just before they started one. It [Costello's house] just got [bulldozed] one day [to make way] for the oval. I think it could've made a good changing room for the kids or something, but it was such a shame to see it go, even back then because it was in much better repair than Stirk Cottage. And McRae Road goes all the way to Cotherstone now [and separates the properties] but when I was a little girl growing up, [it stopped at Urch Road] Cotherstone Road wasn't paved [then]; none of the roads were paved.

**Oh, ok.**

And the rest of it was a [property] belonged to Mr McNamara who wrote a history of Kalamunda called, *Kalamunda in the Dreamtime*.

(25:03)

Mr McNamara was a rather eccentric man. He used to work for the Tax Department [and] he [would] wear a bit of rope holding up his trousers and things like that, but a very Christian man. He left all that land to the [Catholic] Church, [before the existing church was built but apparently they had to build their church in Railway Road because that was allocated church land. I think that was the story]. And I don't know how the Shire got hold of it but it belongs to the Shire now. We used to love playing in Mac's paddock and we'd climb the fig trees and eat the figs and [grapes from the] grapevines [growing] there [and pick the roses]. No-one cared because it was just a derelict garden [and no one had lived there for years].

Who are some other notable people [in my life]? [My friend Patricia O'Brien lived in] Urch Road, [which] was mostly bush [and I'd cut through 'Mac's paddock' to get to her place]. [I had other school friends with whom I still keep in touch, but my best friends were Kaye Halse, Pauline Beazley [who lived at 17 Recreation Road], Patricia O'Brien [and] Moira McCombe. The house Moira lived in [was Ellis Cottage at 21] Central Road [and] is now in History Village as well. That was just [one up from] the corner of Central Road and what used to be another bakery, which is now an estate agent, I think. [Mr Ellis was a butcher and the bakery was originally a butcher's shop. He was long gone at the time I'm recalling. A Scottish family named Lucas had the bakery and used to focus on making pastries and doughnuts and other delicacies as well as fancy breads. During the Christmas season, they baked dozens of Christmas cakes and the heady aroma would fill the air when we walked by. In a back room they had bins of mixed fruit and peel and icing from which Moira and I used to grab handfuls of when we went over there. The front of the bakery was a cobbler shop with Jock Burnside being the local shoe repairer. Later on the Embersons took over the bakery, followed by the Hawkins family who had the bakery for many years.] I can picture every house, where it was, [in Central Road] which is all now [mostly] taken over by commercial buildings.

[5<sup>th</sup> of November was Guy Fawkes night]. [On] bonfire nights, [the neighbourhood dogs would retreat inside]. We'd all [build] a bonfire [over a period of months] and when you think about it, how crazy we were, we used to all make a Guy and sit it on [the pile] so we could burn it. I mean, that's terrible! I just can't imagine [why] we just took it for granted, we just did it. I'd never let my kids do [that]. Dad used to bring [home] all these little crackers. They were Tom Thumbs they were called, little tiny crackers all joined together by their wicks. We'd have Jumping Jacks and Penny Bombs, we'd all sit round [the table] with [our] containers and dad would sort them out so we'd all get an equal amount and Sparklers [a Catherine Wheel], and we'd get one rocket [between us]. [As soon as it was dark, we'd have our bonfire, and] then we'd sit on our verandah and watch everyone else's [bonfires]; you could [watch the fireworks going off all round town].

In those days, because we had no scheme water, [there were few introduced trees to block your view so] you could see right through from [our place] right across to [Peet and] Urch Roads, [to James and Patricia Roads, and even] see people hang out their washing. [As we were high on a hill, we had an unrestricted view west] and could see right down to Perth, no trees in the way because no-one had water to water them, [and see the light burning at Kwinana]. It's a very different view nowadays but we just [had] the [existing] bush that were the best part.

Walking [to and] home from school we used to cut through 'Mac's paddock' as we called it, and part of [that] was [also] bush. I think it's all houses now. [Andrew Street wasn't there then]. But the smell of the gum blossoms and [flowers], was just lovely. We used to come down Boonooloo Road and that was all patched because they couldn't afford to fix the roads in those days [after the War]. There would be thousands of little patches of potholes in the road and they all had [different] shapes [and shades of grey] so, of course, we kids took ages to go to [and from] school because, this one was water wings, that one was a kookaburra, that was Tasmania. We'd be jumping from one to the other and [would sometimes just arrive at school on the bell]. We'd do the same thing on the way [back and take ages to get home but] it didn't matter in those days. There [were jonquils], freesias and [babianas] growing wild, [on the verges]. [They were] introduced plants [so] we [could] pick them. It was a very uncomplicated life but we [still] all had rules and [it was just expected] you followed them. It was just expected.

Welshpool Road was there but it didn't go down the hill, they cut it in[to] the side of the hill in the late 50s. [Before that], you had to go down Crystal Brook Road. We'd catch the old Kostera buses, they were red and black buses, and [they] could hardly make the turn sometimes. [When we came up the hill] we'd go up to get to the top of Crystal Brook Road, [and] just before where you go over the bridge there used to be a little creek [where on hot days] we'd [sometimes] have to stop and wait for the radiator to cool down so everyone would [just] get out and wait; no-one worried. There might be a little crate of chickens that someone had put on it and there was always a mail bag. They just dumped the mail in the bus [in the Terrace] and we'd take it up to the Post Office. It was amazing, how it was done, just casual but it all worked [smoothly].

[Later on, I mean, they always had a youth club, it was the church youth club. As we grew older] it probably was a bit of a hardship not having a telephone because, if [you] were in Perth, you had to get the last bus home so if you went to a film [or dance] in Perth you'd have to leave before it finished so you could catch the last bus, 'cos [otherwise] you'd be stranded getting home. [There were no street lights down our way then either]. There was no bus service going right around the town. It went along Canning Road and it went along, the terminus was always opposite the [present] library, outside Dunne's Tea Rooms, that was the terminus but only the main roads, [Kalamunda Road (Dog Hill) and Lesmurdie Road]. You just had to walk a couple of miles to the bus stop but no-one cared, you just did it, it was part of your lifestyle.

(30:06)

When I married, I lived out in Carmel and my friends just used to walk out to Carmel, walk from Kalamunda to visit me. They walked [all the way] (laughs). It was just something, you just didn't think about, you know, worry about the walk, you just did it. It was part of our life. We walked [to the shops] and we'd ride our bikes [too] but walking was [safe], we [all] owned the place, you know. There was no congestion of cars anywhere because you didn't see many on the road.

**I guess you could take short cuts as well.**

We used to cut through the bush a lot.

**Made it a little bit shorter.**

Yes, it did, but with bikes you couldn't. But, no, I loved, we loved the walk home [from school and Youth Club] 'cos that's a good time to socialise as well; and mum never minded if I brought home half a dozen friends. I don't know, with myself [as an adult] I'd [be] thinking, 'oh, no, they're going to eat all the cake, and I'd have to cook another one'. Mum never worried, she'd just do that. Once I [asked] mum 'can I invite the youth club home for supper after we go carol singing?' We used to go round carol singing in the bus. It wasn't considered corny in those days. And mum said, 'yes, how many?' and I just said, 'sixty (60)', and she didn't turn a hair. I was most ungrateful, I think, I just took it for granted, but even my sister stayed back and helped mum make these homemade sausage rolls [and sponges], because you couldn't buy things ready-made. She'd make everything. [The table] was absolutely jam packed, [a] beautiful spread and dad stayed home just to meet everyone, 'cos normally he was at the trots or something (laughs). Dad timed everyone. He reckoned the table was cleared in two (2) minutes, forty five (45) seconds (laughs) and he just said they even took the grapefruit that had the little toothpicks on it. He said, 'that even went!' He couldn't believe it. [Dad] said, it was just like a plague of locusts had descended on the table. I think parents rose to the occasion in those days but nowadays if my children [had asked me the same thing of me] I'd be saying, 'sixty (60), what are you talking about?' Is there anything else you'd like me to talk about?

**I'll just run through and have a look. You mentioned some of the businesses, were there any other businesses in the town centre?**

Well, we had the Commonwealth Bank and the bank manager [at the time] always lived in a little house [which was] on the corner of Central Road and Mead Street. That was the [allocated] bank manager's house, a little asbestos [house with a] tiled roof. He always lived there. [Other] businesses, yes, there was Steere's Newsagents. That was on the corner of Central and Haynes Street [where the present Commonwealth Bank is], [run by] Mr Steere. [He used to deliver our newspapers. He'd roll them up by hand into a boomerang shape, hurl them from his car and they would land where he wanted them to]; and up the top where the library is now, that was the railway line. The library, of course, wasn't there but they had the Fruit Bowl, which was run by the [Roads and] Underwood [families] and they sold fresh [fruit and] veggies. One little thing, they used to pay you for secondhand golf balls. So my brother and I thought, 'now, how can we earn some money?' Where Jorgensen Park is [now], that used to be the golf course, the Golf Links. There was a creek there in winter and people used to [swing wide and] their golf balls [often] used to land in the creek so we'd be hiding in the bushes and we'd see one and we'd run and grab it. [After a while] when we had about a dozen of them, we'd go and get a little bit of pocket money from the Fruit Bowl which they gave us in exchange for secondhand golf balls. We'd clean them up but most of them were in pretty good condition; that was one little [wicked] thing we used to do. The train station gradually became derelict and became the MTT (Metropolitan Transport Trust) Bus Station in the late 50s. So we had Dunne's Tea Rooms and that [was] opposite the [present] library on the corner. [The building still stands and has had several businesses running from it, including an opticians and doctor's surgery.] Now where Thai on the Hill is, that was Thompson's Hardware Store. Although it was a hardware store, half of it was hardware and the rest was groceries and [such].

I don't remember ever buying perishables there though but it was [definitely] a grocery and hardware [store], and [it] had a lovely big verandah all around it. All the shops had verandahs round them and in the [late 60s and] 70s they [were] all pulled down for some unknown reason. The [Kalamunda] hotel used to have [a few businesses there]. [There was] the barber shop there; Mr Marshall, had it there for years and he used to have all these very antiquated barber's [tools] hanging on the wall. [He even used an old fashioned barber's chair. One of the verandah poles was painted in red and white candy stripes outside his shop.] Then we had Dr [Thornton], our local doctor [who had a *surgery* there in one of the rooms just inside the hotel. *Hawleys Shoe Store* was there at the front. They moved to Barberry Square when it was built around 40 years ago.] My brother and I used to make little [yachts by putting paper sails on matchboxes] and when it was raining, we'd float them down the gutter [from the hotel] and they'd [sail] all the way down to Haynes Street. That was just one of the little pastimes that we did [if we were up in town on a rainy day. You could always find a matchbox or two near the hotel. Along Railway Road, a dentist moved there in the early 60's. His name was Mr Ogg.]

**Ok.**

(35:12)

We had the Soapbox Derby. That was a real big event and I've still got the little badge saying, *Soap Box Derby, one [shilling]*. It was a [shilling to enter and] my brother and I thought, we've got to enter [that] but it's got to be a soapbox. We knew that mum used to drain the clothes into an old deal box, so we thought that must be a soapbox. We went to the dump and we found four (4) wheels but they didn't all match [as they were different sizes] but we found them [and nailed old hose onto the small ones as tyres, to make them the same size.] We nailed them on with big roofing nails bent over onto bits of wood. [We 'borrowed' mum's rope clothesline for steering and we practiced going down Cotherstone Road from Robins Road; it was good fun but the road was all gravel then.] It was a real disaster [on the actual day] because when we entered, other [kids'] dads, had [made] some really top of the range [billy carts]. You had to start at the top of Haynes Street, [turn right into Canning Road] and it ended down at Boonooloo Road. The garage wasn't there in those days. We set off [with me running alongside] and [my brother] only got as far as [a few yards when] one (1) wheel came off and he was trying to balance on three (3) wheels. I was cheering him on, I remember that. All the people who lived in the main street [and from the businesses] were out there, cheering everyone one. [Our cart came to a sticky end down the bottom of the hill and we had to retrieve the bits and carry them home before Mum found out.] My brother gave me his badge and I've still got it (laughs).

**Was that an annual event?**

No. [I don't think so. That was over sixty (60) years ago.] It was the only time I've ever known there to be a Soapbox Derby [and now looking back] I think what a shame we didn't have cameras like we do [these] days. In those days you had a little Box Brownie [that only] took eight (8) photos so you had to be very careful what you used them on, but it would've been great to see some photos of the event. When I think back [I remember] the hard work we put into making this terrible [billycart and] then we had to get it home. And the little rope clothesline mum hung in the wash house for smalls, we had to get that back in the wash house without her even knowing because we [hadn't] asked her, because we thought she might say no, and [as] we wouldn't go against her wishes we thought it was better that we don't tell her about it [in the first place]. Other businesses: there were, Kostera's [who] had [the Kalamunda Bus Service]. Their little garage [was near the top of

Haynes Street] and they always had a little flying red horse [sign] above it which I think got stolen in latter years. We had Giles' Drapery and we had the chemist, I just can't think of their name now [Gillespie's Chemist] but he used to make all these concoctions.

When we were cleaning up mum and dad's old place, there were still some of their remedies [in the cupboard in nice old bottles, such as *Gillespies Stomach Powders* that were mixed] by hand there and I said to my sister, 'I think we should donate these to the Historical Society', but she threw them [all the concoctions] out anyway (laughs). Most of [the land was] bush land in the main street. We had Kay's Kash and Karry right down the bottom where the tea rooms [are] now. What's it called, that place?

### **Merchant Tea Rooms.**

Merchant Tea Rooms. That was Kay's Kash and Karry, and next to that was the tennis courts, and on the very corner they built a little milk bar called The Kookaburra. That was run by the North's; and Mary McInerney used to work there as well. So that's where we kids used to hang out [sometimes] as teenagers. Where Crabb's is now, that was just a bit of open space in the bush 'cos Crabb's had their lovely little shop with their house on the opposite corner. There were no [self-serve] supermarkets in those days, you just went in and [ordered] over the counter and they'd weigh your sugar, weigh everything and you went home with it [in brown paper bags]. They had one of these lovely old cash registers on the bench, a big silver thing. Other businesses? [Next to the Roads Board there was a house owned by the Van Bovens and it was *The Dutch Laundry* which catered mostly for the hotel. There was always washing strung along lines every day of the year.] There was Steere's Newsagents, Giles' Drapery [and Haberdashery], Coomburg's. Now what did Coomburg's have? I think they had a sort of [clothing] shop, [which was later demolished to make way for *Hastings*, owned by Mr Backhouse.] And then around the corner [in Railway Road] was [the] one hairdresser in the town, Mrs Talbot, and [later] a Scottish lady [named Mrs Findlay] took over from [her]; but that's all gone now. [Her husband was a Kalamunda bus driver. Where the garage is on the corner of Boonooloo and Kalamunda Road] well, it was originally Mann Motors. Mr Mann used to [originally] have his garage on Railway Road opposite the [Methodist] Church and he eventually [moved] down to the corner opposite Boonooloo Road. He called it Mann Motors [and later sold it to] this Dutch man [who] decided to call it John Motors 'cos his name was John. Mr Mann, M-a-double 'n', his wife used to be a big supporter of the church. [and their daughter, Mrs Jobson, was one of my favourite Sunday School teachers. Next to the hotel, where the fish and chip shop is was Orrell and Bavistock's Butcher Shop. Back then the Orrell's lived on the corner of Cotherstone and Peet Roads and the Bavistock's lived in Recreation Road. Where Mann's garage had been in Railway Road, that section of Mundaring Road past the roundabout wasn't there, that was just a sort of steep quarried hill. When you came up Mundaring Weir Road you turned right and came up what is now a section of Spring Road. The section of road you used to turn into is blocked with boulders now.]

We always had the [corner] tuck shop [near] the primary school, I think, the Seaton's had it first when I [first] remember [it], then the Parker's had it then the Lewis' had it; and a lot of people after that.

(40:12)

I used to work in there, after I'd married, making lunches for the school kids. [On the opposite corner from the shop, Mr Mundy had about an acre of land with a big tin shed on it from where he used to sell produce from his own garden, and also lollies].

The rest of the place was very bush-like. I can't think of [anymore but] there must've been other businesses. There were a couple of banks. The Commonwealth was one I mentioned and the E, S & A (English, Scottish and Australian) bank was in part of the old hotel building in Railway Road. I may have mentioned before, that the Edwards' lived in a lovely little house in Haynes Street, where there is now a coffee shop, next to where the Westpac bank is now] and they decided to build the first delicatessen [across the road] which they called The Edwardene. When they left town a few years later, Prunster's took it over and it doesn't exist now. I think *The Last Drop's* built on its site. Yeah, where the Post Office is now, that's where the [rodeo] used to go and [there were two little cottages nearby where the Ralston's and Wilkinson's lived.] I just can't think of any other thing that might [be of interest].

Well, Anzac Day was always a big day because being in the Scouts [and Guides] we used to march from Boonooloo Road corner right up [to the Agricultural Hall], and I can still remember old men from the Boer War marching, with their beards and [medals]. [They marched very upright and proud. They seemed very old and it must have been a long way up the hill for them.] Then as a bribery [to attend the service at the memorial], after we all adjourned into the hall and there was a big keg of ginger beer for all the kids [and one of beer for the adults.] You could line up half a dozen times, which we did, got all this lovely cool ginger beer and the men would go to the RSL Hall and booze up (laughs), [reminisce] and then play indoor bowls as well.

**Ok.**

There used to be a little cottage attached [to the RSL building] where [the] caretakers lived there who were friends of mum. [Mum belonged to the RSL Ladies Auxiliary which catered for christenings, weddings, birthdays and naturalizations etc., at the Agricultural Hall.]

Where Coles is now, [there were] lots of private homes there. I just can't think of any other businesses. Oh, we had [another] shoemaker [and fish and chip shop built later next to The Kookaburra in Canning Road and a new hardware shop called Union Stores] we didn't have fish and chips [often], maybe once a year or something like that.

[An] Italian shoemaker [and repairer Brescasson, I think his name was], moved in, and he would measure your feet and make shoes to fit but, of course, mum always said, 'what do you think of the fashions?' They were really old-fashioned shoes but they would've been comfortable for those who wanted them. No, can't think of any others at the moment. What's that place, Brumby's? In the 60s, Mr and Mrs Watson who lived down in Seaview Terrace, decided to open up a shoe shop and they called it *The Silver Slipper* but it wasn't very successful [as our population wasn't really big enough to support two shoe stores.] They had it for a couple of years and then it faded out and became lots of other things [and is now Brumby's.] Then later on, a newsagent, [, butcher and chemist went up] down there; but I can't think of any other businesses, unless you have some to jog my memory.

**No, no, and you've given me some that other people haven't mentioned so that's really good. Thank you.**

Oh, ok. Anything else you'd like to ask me, because I could probably remember.

**You said that your dad brought houses down from the Goldfields.**



Yes, he was a carpenter, he was also an electrician, yes. There's still a few goldfields homes around here.

### Really?

Oh, yes. [There were originally ten in the main block between Canning and Robins Road.] Also, opposite the high school there's a big block that [now] has been subdivided [into two (2)]. There was a little cottage [on that block brought down] from the goldfields that dad sold in the 60s [and the new owners took the house away so the block's been vacant until recently.] Dad could've been a millionaire, really, he bought up all this land in Gooseberry Hill, blocks and blocks, but he'd buy them for five (5) pounds and sell them [for a small profit]. He'd say, 'look, just a quick [profit]. It's better than bank interest', but if he held onto things [he would have made a lot of money.] He had a most magnificent block [in Gooseberry Hill] with a one sixty (160°) view right of everything [right along the coast] and we used to say, 'Dad, can't we build [on it]? can't we live out here?' It was magnificent bush land and trees and that and he said, 'there's no amenities; there's no water, there's no phone, there's no electricity', dad couldn't see that far ahead, so he sold all those blocks. There's still five (5) Goldfields homes [left in the main block]. There's one on the corner of Blamire and Canning.

(45:01)

There's one on the corner of Orange Valley opposite the store, that's a Goldfields home [from Leonora]. There's only, two (2) left in Windsor Road just before McNess Street, and of course there's the one in Robins Road, where I grew up, that's still there, 7 Robins Road, but it hasn't got [quite the same] character [because the outside is modernised]. The [owners have] made it beautiful [inside] but they've put tiles over the iron roof and they've sort of closed in the front verandah [with cladding], so it hasn't got the same Goldfields [bungalow] look about it. Once I was chatting to them and they invited me over. They've done a lovely job of [restoring it] inside but it's just the fact that they've closed in the verandah [that's disappointing]. Yeah, there's still a few out in Walliston, of dad's old houses, and Bickley. Of course these days, people are so scared of asbestos, but I grew up with asbestos and even as a married woman, I lived in asbestos homes. Still alive! I think it's only if you're pulling stuff to bits [that it's dangerous] but the house itself doesn't matter. As long as you keep it maintained and painted. The Hills Estate Agency was the only estate agent [in town back then]. Now, I didn't mention that [before]. That was opposite the hotel, a bit further down, in where the library grounds are now, a little place about as big as the Fruit Bowl, surrounded by little pine trees. And where Spring Road is, that didn't start there, there was no road. Mundaring Weir Road actually didn't start where it is now, it started where Spring Road is and it went on to Mundaring. So that little bit, really the roundabout wasn't there, that was just sort of steep hill when you came up Mundaring Weir Road and you turned around and came up that way. A lot of the roads they have now, weren't there of course. Dad used to deal a lot with Mr Slatyer of the Hills Estate Agency and his son, Hughie, took over from him. But, yeah, that was what dad did. Dad was always interested into the races and he used to devise all these amazing schemes [for winning and hopefully] getting rich quick. It never happened, but it doesn't matter, we had a good life [and didn't owe anyone a cent].

Dad actually was a contractor for the Land Settlement Scheme down south. You know, you had to go where the work was and dad would go on these awfully unsealed roads where they were opening up towns like Narrikup [and around Margaret River] and all that. [He'd] build sheep pens and little farm houses or fix up old forestry homes for people. Of course, the roads were so bad you might only get up home every three (3) weeks [and] he'd have to camp. [He'd also go up to

Wannamal and places like that, building drying racks for the grapes.] Yeah, I think a lot of people had to just chase work [wherever it was and although Dad had been] an electrician on the mines in Wiluna [and still kept his licence going, he said it was tedious work and he didn't want to do that sort of job].

He was born in Kalgoorlie and my mum was brought up in Coolgardie, and that's where they met [when he was nineteen (19)]. Then he got a job in the mines at Wiluna, as an electrician so when they got married of course, they went to live in Wiluna [but] dad left the mines [after about ten (10) years] because he said he'd seen men with their lips worn away and he thinks it was arsenic, I don't know if it was arsenic or cyanide, I think [he said] it was arsenic. But they used something in the treatment of the gold [that was poisonous] and he thought he [should] get out because he didn't want to go like that, but the men had to work. There wasn't the dole then, [or compensation either]. The men had to work to support their families.

We used to have the Ice Works [and cool drink factory] as well, so mum used to run the Ice Works while dad was on the mines. Later on, when he left the mines, we opened up a shop called Raffles, nothing like the real one in Singapore, I'm quite sure. Mum used to make pasties and pies for miners and it was the milk bar as well. But everything was rationed and that's what I most remember in my childhood. We had coupons and they'd come in your name and that meant that mum could get a bit of material to make us something [or buy us shoes]. You'd get food rations, [tea and coffee rations] and clothing rations once a year. Food rations would come more often so mum would say she'd be able to [buy] half a pound of tea with one, or some powdered milk. Everything was rationed, even cotton and buttons and things. When I was two (2), I'd received, this lovely doll and it was bigger than me because I was only little. I dropped it and its head broke and smashed, so all the war years I had this doll with no head. Then mum took me down to the Dolls Hospital one day, my doll was called Lovey Dowwy [from when I first got it] (laughs) because I couldn't talk properly then, but she said, 'we're going to get a head for Lovey Dolly'.

(50:02)

I saw these beautiful heads on a shelf and [I remember being happy, thinking], 'oh, I'm going to get this beautiful head', and mum picked this little tiny, puny looking head because that's all she could afford I think. It was much too small for Lovey Dolly but she [still] sewed [her new] head on. I would've loved one of the big beautiful ones with eyelashes and [glass] eyes and everything. I haven't got Lovey Dolly 'cos she was made of felt, but I've still [kept] her head (laughs).

**What made them decide to move to Kalamunda? I'm not sure if you said that.**

Oh, the gold was running out and it was becoming a ghost town so it was time to move. A lot [of the population had left by then]. [Some] moved to Kalamunda, a lot of them moved to Mandurah, strangely enough, [probably because it was vastly different from Wiluna]. [ . I think Mum and Dad chose Kalamunda because they liked the idea of having bush around them and it was a healthy place for a family.] Kalamunda was really one of these convalescent rest home places [and offered a very different lifestyle from Wiluna for us]. It was where you went for a holiday to get away from the city. It all seemed so far away, you know, up in the sticks. My relatives thought it was coming up into the country. They'd all arrive on the bus and they'd walk [the few] k's [kilometers] home to our place. They always went home with a big bunch of flowers, if there were any out, which was on our blocks anyway, cos dad had lots of land, you know. We kids grew up climbing trees and going out into the bush. We had lots of pets, [our place was] full of [chooks], cats and rabbits and guinea pigs and [and tame magpies and kookaburras], and the dogs; I couldn't imagine a life without them.

We always had people to stay. Mum always had an extra bed [or two] she'd put up on the verandah. It was safe to sleep on the verandahs in those days. In summer people would come, 'cos mum was a musician and we'd have these composers and [other artistic] people [would] just stay [on]. They must've thought Kalamunda air must've been good [for inspiration]. Now, Kalamunda seems like a lovely fresh place, and it is, but a few years ago I was out [near] Lake Eyre and all of a sudden I said, '[can you] smell that' and everyone said, 'what are you talking about?' I said, 'this smell. This is the Kalamunda of my childhood, this smell'. The fresh air had a special smell. It took me back to my childhood: it was the same fresh [scent] that I didn't even realise I [hadn't experienced for years]. I said, 'this is [a] Kalamunda smell', and it was only fresh air; and as the population's increased, the air is still pretty clear but it hasn't got that lovely fresh [air it had back then]. So I didn't even know air had a smell. I'm raving on.

**No, no, that's fine. Just going back to your dad. I am very intrigued at how he brought the houses down from the goldfields.**

Oh, [these days they would be transported whole but back then] he would just pull them down [it was very labour intensive]. He'd mark everything with carpenters chalk, everything was numbered; every joint, every joist [as he took the bits down] so he knew exactly where everything went so he would know [where they should go]. [He'd first clear a spot in the middle of the block, and then deposit the timber there.] A few years ago, in Windsor Road, the [owner] was pulling [one of them] down, he [offered] me a couple of photos of it before he pulled it down. I [was pleased] because mum and dad [had] actually lived in that house in Wiluna when they were first married [and when my sister was born she was brought home to that house]. He said, 'oh, I'm pulling it all down, but it's all numbered. Everything's [coded and] numbered'. I said, 'well, that's how dad did it', cos you don't want to [be having to work out where] every single joist and joint [go]. If it's measured, you know it goes there, and it's his own measurements, so he knew [his system]. He did have an offsider he employed to help him sometimes [whose name was] Ivor Winter. I don't know whatever became of him but he'd help dad put them up sometimes 'cos some things were hard to lift [and he could be working on the block while dad brought some more timber down. Bringing the timber down from Wiluna, Leonora and Meekatharra to the blocks was difficult as the roads were rough all the way back then except the main roads. He'd have to clear a way through each block]. Yeah; and there were always trees overhanging. It was really nice actually. It was just a very pleasant place to live. I don't know where the saw mill was but you could always hear [the crosscut saw] in the background somewhere. [Yeah; and Cotherstone Road was gravel back then and there were gum trees overhanging the roads]. It was really nice.

**Ok.**

I think you can delete a lot of that rambling on (laughs).

**You were talking about Kalamunda as a holiday place. Were there lots of people coming up for holidays?**

Yes. In Recreation Road [and Central Road] there used to be a lot of little holiday homes [and guest houses where people came to relax, convalesce, write or paint or just to get away from it all]. Now a lot of people have bought them and extended them, and along Williams Road and Railway Road, [and they're quite valuable]. They [were] the main places [close to town]. Oh, there used to be a little hospital in

the main street but that closed. That was Brown's, I think Brown's ran the hospital. That was in [Haynes Street] on the left but I think that became Coomburg's [but I'm not sure].

**So with that hospital closing down, where was the nearest hospital for people?**

There was a private maternity hospital in Vic Park but Royal Perth was the only [general] one, or there was Hollywood Repatriation Hospital and [and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital later near there too].

(55:11)

Of course, there was King Edward [Memorial Hospital] for women to have their babies. [Nothing was closer than an hour's drive back then.] Dr Kargotich eventually came up [from Vic Park] and took over the Edwards' house [as a surgery] the ones who built The Edwardine, in Haynes Street. [He used it as a surgery] until probably the late 70s and he used to come twice a week. His brother would come one day and he'd come the next day to work at the hospital. Dr Barber was one of our very earliest doctors. [He used to deliver babies in their homes I believe]. He was very old [and died around 1950]. He lived on the corner of Burt Street and Central [Road surrounded by] a big high [tin fence]. There was a fashion in the goldfields to do that; they'd have these [tin fences with] very small corrugations, and you'd put them very high all around your property for some reason. He had that and it wasn't 'til the Swallow's bought it that they pulled the fence down and there was this beautiful garden [to view] with all these lovely [specimen] trees there. [It's been subdivided now]. The Debney's took over from Dr Barber when he died and the Bernie's took over from Dr Debney. The hospital, [in Haynes Street] I think, was [only] a maternity hospital [but I'm not quite sure]. My friend Pauline was born there. I'm just trying to think: there was nothing else [in town]. There was just The Edwardine and there was Thompson's where the Thai on the Hill is, Dunne's Tea Rooms and yeah, that was it. But the holiday homes, people used to come to convalesce or just to get away from it all. A lot of those beautiful old homes have turned into B&Bs now anyway, up along there.

But all this land here where we are now, all bush. It was super for riding your bike or taking your dogs for rambles. It was really great. Everyone had laneways behind their houses so the dunny man could get through. We didn't have a police station back then, we only had the [Roads Board]. The police station that was built in the 70s, I think; that is now the radio station and the house next door was where the police sergeant lived, but I don't know what happened [before] that. [There were not any police here that I remember]. Oh, it was quite well known that if you wanted to get your driver's licence, you'd just go down to Midland, ride around the block and you got your licence. I was so sick of hearing people say that, 'cos everyone did, if they didn't get it somewhere else, they'd go to Midland and get it. I was determined I wasn't going to do that so I got mine in Perth. I didn't want anyone to [sling off and] say, 'oh, she got [hers easily] at Midland', (laughs). You know, our generation drove whereas very few of mum's generation did. Only about two (2) ladies I know used to drive cars. I can't think of anything else I could add to that.

**I think you've pretty much covered everything.**

Ok.

**You've mentioned some community groups that you-**

Scouts and Guides. Well, mum was one of the original, you know, she was one of the original members of the CWA. In Wiluna she joined in 1938 and when we came down in 1947 there wasn't one; so it wasn't 'til 1950 that they formed one and mum was in the original group. She was there for many years and was still a member in 1994 when she died; and she [had received] a Loyal Service Badge. She was also in CWA Choir for many, many years 'cos she could sing any part. She'd just look at the music and read it and [she could sing it straight off] she had a good voice. We had the local Red Cross there. We had Toc-H. I don't know much about them. We'd have the Temperance people come in once a year to the schools and they'd expect us to go up and listen. They had this silly little story about a monkey that used to get drunk and kids had to take the pledge of whether they were going to drink or not but, of course, I never took the pledge because we used to have drinks at home (laughs). Dad always gave us a tiny glass of sherry so no way was I going to take the pledge; but I'd go there just because my friends went there just to see what was going on. That was the Temperance Society. We [joined] the Gould League [that] used to come round [to schools] once a year and talk about all the birds and that and we used to get a little badge.

(1:00:02)

And we'd have Flower Day, [where] every kid was asked to bring in any wildflowers to be displayed at the Royal Show. So [every child in] every State school in the State would bring all these [flowers] to school and I remember Terry Roads bringing a huge bunch of spider orchids and there'd be everything [else] we could find. There was a little school [house] next to the primary school, and the headmaster used to keep them all in his bath until they were picked up and collected and taken to the show and done in beautiful patterns. All the schools would do this from all around. Clearing hasn't always been the demise of the wildflowers, it [was] kids [I think]. We'd file in, class by class, to have a look at all the flowers in the bath (laughs), at Mr Evans' place. So they'd all be sitting there in the bath. All these beautiful flowers, it was just amazing; and orchids, all around the place. They were everywhere.

### **Did you ever go down to the Royal Show and have a look at the display?**

Once or twice we used to. We didn't go every year, it was a special treat. In those days, when you went to the Show, you dressed up, not like now. You'd actually get a new dress or something but I'd get one new dress every year, and that was for the Sunday School Anniversary. You were allowed to wear that to the Show. You'd get it first for the Show, I think. But they used to make these elaborate floral displays from all the beautiful wildflowers and the smell when you went into the Robinson Pavilion, was just this beautiful bush smell. Oh, it was so lovely! I don't know how they kept them nice and fresh for the week. We used to have People's Day on Wednesday and Children's Day on Thursday, and I liked Children's Day better because they always had more things for kids, but mum used to like going People's Day and drag us around [to see], as I thought in those days, boring old exhibits when I wanted to be on sideshow alley.

My friend [Pat O'Brien] used to like the exhibits, and I'd think, what do you want to look at them for? [We girls learnt to do sewing which was put on display at] the Kalamunda Show [every year] and the boys did manual [and fretwork]. I wanted to do manual because they used to [do] marble painting and [make other interesting] stuff. I had to sew and I spent most of my life unpicking it because it wasn't good enough [to please] the teacher. I've still got a couple of things I made for mum when I was about eight (8) or nine (9). I don't think eight (8) or nine (9) year olds could do them now. [In 6<sup>th</sup> Standard we hand sewed a pair of pajamas.] [We had to] learn how to [put up a boring] hem and do hem stitch and [for me it was always] 'no, [the stitches] have got to be all even, take it out'. I'd [have to] sit at the front of the class

unpicking it, and for talking as well, I was a chatterbox, but we learned how to make things and it was always displayed at the Kalamunda Show every year, all our things, but the boys used to do manual and carve little things. I remember Gary Lane made a guitar. I was so envious, and I had to do sewing and we had to do embroidery [instead]. I'd do a lazy daisy pattern and [our] teacher would say, 'Elaine, take it out and do it again'. Oh, it was so laborious but it did help me nowadays, especially when I was a teenager when I embroidered Elvis on the [seat] of my jeans in chain stitch and mum said, 'you make sure you wear a shirt that's going cover that, my girl' (laughs). But it did come in useful for some things. At high school, of course, we learnt how to use a treadle sewing machine, [we] didn't have electric ones then. I was able to make the kid's clothes and my own. I always made my own dresses. We all made our own dresses and we all knitted our own things. We started knitting about seven (7) or eight (8) and by the time you were ten (10) you could make a jumper; it was nothing [unusual]. Everyone was knitting at school. We just all knit [and teach each other new stitches]. And as teenagers, we sewed our own clothes. It was expected because you couldn't really afford to buy things off the hook. Times are so different now (laughs).

My brother went to Perth Boys and my sister went to Girdlestone and then for some reason [my peers and I had to go to Midland Junction High School]. Governor Stirling wasn't built then. It used to be Midland TAFE, just an old [building], it's where Dome is anyway; that's where we went to school. We went on to Governor Stirling later [we had to put up with the rest of the wings being] built all round us [with noisy jackhammers and other tools]. It was pulled down recently and I hated it actually. When I was teaching there I actually saw my old locker and the old wash basins we used to use. I think, 'gosh, all that time ago, and there's my old locker and it hasn't changed' (laughs). No-one worried about us and we didn't have air-conditioning or anything. No-one worried about the noise, we just got on with life.

(1:05:06)

We were not pampered in those days, you just got on with life. It's the same as the first day of [primary] school, there was no [gently] breaking you in, you were just left there. I remember seeing Brian Kostera crying [and] Christine Harvey crying. I thought, 'I wonder what they're crying?', and mum said, 'you're not going to cry, are you?' So I burst into tears because I thought that was expected of me but then as soon as mum went I was fine but Brian cried all day. I remember that and I thought, 'what's he crying for?' I was told what an adventure this was going to be; but we were not mollycoddled. The [teachers] were probably a bit tough on us but we were probably a bit more self-reliant in those days [as a result], really. I think we were. You know, even the standard of work was probably a little bit higher then I think. In 1<sup>st</sup> year high we had Shakespeare, which they wouldn't do now. They don't even do it for Year 12 now, so it's a bit different. [Although I think in some ways now], education's better because kids have more choice. I wanted to learn French but [as] I was doing a commercial course so I wasn't allowed to [but] now you [can choose]. I could never understand geometry. I think that's why I went [on] to [do] a commercial course, because I couldn't understand geometry. I was good at algebra but geometry, no. We all end up being educated, anyway.

### **So what did you do after high school?**

Well, I didn't want to work inside. I wanted to be an outdoor person so I got a job as a kennel girl for the Guide Dog Association [which I loved], and that was in Belmont. I think the RSPCA took over [the premises because the Guide Dogs] moved over East, you see. So when they moved over East I got a job at the Wheatsheaf, [which] I hated. The Wheatsheaf Tea Rooms up – I think it was Milligan Street, King Street, one of those, I hated it, [but Mum and Dad expected you to take on any job as long

as you remained employed and] I wanted to prove to mum and dad that I could [do it on my own].

It was me establishing my identity. I wanted to do what I wanted to do. Anyway, I ended up working in [the costing office at Harris Scarfe and Sandovers and used the office] skills I learnt at school, well, I could use the shorthand and typing. Then I got married and then later on I went and studied to become a teacher and brought up, I had five (5) children and they all went to Kalamunda Primary. I'm just so sorry that none of my grandchildren went there because some of them live here. It would've been nice to have three (3) generations going to the primary school. Kalamunda High School, [was supposed to be built in time for us to attend as they had cleared the bushland years before but the building was never even started by the time we started high school which is why we had to travel. I think life would've been a whole lot easier because there were two (2) buses [Mr Ayling and Mr Conrad]. One had to go at ten past seven (7:10am) [because of the Forrestfield run]. You had to be up [early to] walk all the way to catch the school bus [on Canning Road]. [You alternated buses each week. It was] ten past seven (7:10am) [one week], and the second week it was half past seven (7:30am). So [even though] you could alternate it, the bus didn't get [back to Kalamunda] 'til four thirty (4:30pm) [then] you'd have to walk home [and] do your homework and that. I think if we could've had [attended] high school up here, we'd have had a much happier [time]. You could [have] walked home for lunch, and walked home from school. You wouldn't have to get up [so] early and catch the buses. I hated it. I [disliked] high school so much and people would say, 'well, why did you become a school teacher?' And I'd say, 'because I wanted to make a difference', I wanted to change things a bit. I hated all those rules and regulations, like you had to wear your tie [when] it was a hot day. [Once] I took my tie off and I got into trouble. I said, 'why do we have to wear a tie on a hot day?' [and was told, 'Because it's the rules!'] You weren't allowed to walk around the front of the school because it was out of bounds and you weren't allowed to talk to the boys [even though you'd grown up with them]. You had to sit next to them in class as punishment but you weren't allowed to fraternise with them. It was so ridiculous, all these silly rules so I thought, 'if I was a teacher I'd change this and I'd change that', well I didn't because you can't. [But I hope I made a bit of a difference. I liked helping people learn]. I hated the chalk and talk thing. We had a teacher, [who] would just write on the board, and as she wrote, we'd [copy] it [all] down and learn it at home and she'd test us on it; and that was her method of teaching. The same with Shakespeare, we were never told about the plot or anything, we'd just read it; and in spite of that, I enjoyed it, but it wasn't really teaching. We could've just learnt it out of a book, just copied it down, [but I think that was the accepted way it was done] in those days. Every so often you'd get good teachers. At Kalamunda Primary my [favourite] one was Neil Earp. [I had him in 6<sup>th</sup> Standard. My friends Pat and Pauline had him for 3 years because they were up at the Scout Hall]. He was very good. He gave us a real conglomeration of everything, and he even taught us decimal currency, which we didn't need. It wasn't even on the curriculum I think, he just taught us and I thought that was good fun. We [also] had Mr Stephens [who was known to be a good teacher but] whom I didn't like [really like because he'd rap his knuckles on your head if you made a mistake].

(1:10:03)

Mr Evans was the headmaster. You were always terrified of the headmaster because in those days if you stepped out of line you got what they called the cuts, six (6) of the best [with the cane], you know. So you didn't want to step out of line.

Once, it was pouring with rain and dad was up from down south and mum said, '[Alan, will you] drive Elaine to school, [because she's] running late, so she doesn't have to walk in all this heavy rain', and I said, 'no, I'll walk'. No way did I want to be

seen arriving in a car, you just didn't [get driven to school], it was unheard of. But not only did dad drive me to school, he drove right across the school grounds to my classroom and all the kids were staring. They'd never seen a car coming [into the playground], [so they] were just staring [at me] and I was so embarrassed. Instead of being grateful I was slinking out of the car and going to class. I was only about seven (7), but dad was trying to do me a favour but kids don't want to be different. They don't want to stand out, '[ooh, ah, 'I'm going to tell on you], you're going to get into trouble' [the kids said]. I didn't know why but because it was something different, I was going to get into trouble. But once, mum said, 'Alan, you've got to drive the kids to school, it's wet'. Dad was in bed, he said, 'I don't want to get up'. He'd been working hard down south, [had arrived home] the night before so he had his jarmies on and he had his slippers (laughs) and he put his overcoat on and drives us to school. Coming home he ran out of petrol and he was so embarrassed; 'cos he had to walk home in his [striped] pyjamas and get the Gerry can [and go to the garage]. [Dad was so fastidious and] you just didn't do that sort of thing. Oh, poor dad; but it makes you laugh now but he wasn't happy, [to show off his] pajamas and slippers (laughs) [in case] people would think, 'have you been out all night?' and of course mum meeting [her friends got to hear all about it].

Where [the old Roads Board used to be], the old Shire buildings, there used to be stables at the back. Not [exactly] stables, it was sort of corrals for, we used to have wild horses running all over the place and they'd put them in there [if they could catch them, and other stray stock]. But there used to be a Shire depot as well at the back [where] there were all these [empty] drums [which held] tar in them. My friends the Halse's used to live [across the road and] we decided to play a game of hidey, so I took little Judith [who] was about three (3) years younger [with me]; we hid in one of these barrels (laughs). I was coming home from Sunday School, [so was in my best dress]. No-one could find us so they all went [home] so in the end we climbed out and went [back to her place]. We hadn't looked at ourselves but Mrs Halse [took one look and] said, 'go home Elaine, go home'. [She was really annoyed and] said, 'what have you been doing?' We were covered in tar. I had a little dress with pink and yellow roses on and I thought oh - lucky I'd taken my coat off at the Halse's and I put it on. Mum saw me [slinking] up the drive and she said, 'what have you done? You haven't got mud all over your clothes?' because I'd got into trouble for getting in mud once, and I was so relieved when she said that. I said, 'no mum, it's only tar' and I wasn't prepared for mum's screech, 'tar! what have you been doing?' And she could never get the tar off the clothes unfortunately. I think I'd only worn the dress a couple of times, [and it had to be used as a rag], my anniversary dress. And worse still every little pore on my legs was little black spots where the tar had got in. [They were] little escapades like that [which] we used to get up to.

**Ok, well, if you're happy.**

I'm happy. Is there anything else? Do you want to delete some of that?

**No, no, it's all fine.**

I just tend to get excited and rave on a bit – irrelevant stuff.

**No, that's all very good.**

Anything you'd like to talk about? Yes, a lot of people didn't have refrigerators and we still had the ice man. Mr Goggin his name was, and he used to live in [Burt street] where Kalamunda Toyota is now, was a little house with a [large gum tree outside, where] I think the Hope's lived after [them]. Pauline used to go past



singing, 'Mr Goggin has gone in the noggin. Mr Goggin has gone in the noggin', (laughs) and he'd come out [and we'd run away]. I don't think her mum ever knew this. He used to deliver ice around to people because [they] had ice chests. He'd put the block of ice in the top and it would just keep the bottom part cool. My friend, Moira, [who] lived in [the] Central Road house, used to have one of those little Coolgardie safes with the hessian around it. You'd put the block of ice on top [and it would drip down] and wet all the hessian and keeps things cool. It was just a very simple life. Yeah, that's about all I can think of.

(1:15:00)

**Ok. Well, my last question is.**

Yeah, sure!

**We've probably covered it but what do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding areas in the hills?**

I actually don't think Kalamunda's special anymore [because it's lost its former character]. There's too many real estate agents [for one thing]; [and] too fewer bush blocks. You can go up the street and not know anyone. It hasn't got that lovely village feel it used to have. Everything is commerce now. People who don't know what it used to be like still say it's a lovely town. I think [there have been a lot of improvements], the town square's nice; but I think [it was] very shortsighted in letting a lot of these lovely buildings be pulled down to make way for places like Chicken Treat and [other businesses]. [There were some] lovely old buildings [along there and they should've retained some]. All [the character] is rapidly going and it's [becoming] like any other [suburb]. It used to have a [rustic] uniqueness and they're just not being appreciated by keeping it, retaining the character. Also, as the pine trees die along Canning Road; I mean, I'm a conservationist and I plant native trees all the time, but where they die they're replacing them with Eucalypts. I think they should have replaced them with pines, because that's our history. They're going to completely change the face of Kalamunda; it's [already] changed so much. I think [the] people are still nice wherever you go, that's one good thing. I hope we never get traffic lights or anything big like that.

I would've liked to see the houses stay in the main streets, to keep that village feel but I suppose the property is so valuable now. Special? Probably the people [who live here] are what] make it special, the buildings aren't really. They could've left the old horse trough there too. That wasn't hurting anybody (laughs). No, I think [though] Kalamunda has a lot of active groups in the area, [the town itself] doesn't have that nice [cosy atmosphere]. To me, it's like [and I meant the town as well] going to any other place. I used to love [driving back up the hill] and thinking, 'I'm home.' The old hotels are the [only buildings they've retained], they've got rid of everything [else]. [They call it progress]. No, I wouldn't say I don't like Kalamunda [it's just not special to me anymore]. I prefer Darlington because it [hasn't been ruined by development]. That's all I can say really. I just hope they don't keep changing it too much. I suppose in another thirty (30) years all those buildings will go [too].

**I guess so.**

There's nothing [much] left of the old Kalamunda [as we knew it]. Even the old Methodist Church is now a private residence. [Yes but then again] I [do] like going to the coffee shops up here [which is a modern thing] because [they have a nice social atmosphere] but you can do that anywhere else. It hasn't got the uniqueness, [it's

not the] lovely place that [made] everyone want to come to Kalamunda [and stay]. It's just suburbia now, to me, to me; but I that's just my opinion.

**That's very interesting.**

But I don't know what other people have said.

**Well, this is your story so that's fine. Ok. Well, I'll wrap it up and thank you very much for time and your memories.**

You're most welcome.

Interview ends: 1 hour 19 minutes 59 seconds



Elaine Sargent aged 4



From back: Natalie, Malcolm and Elaine Sargent (aged 6), approx. 1949

**Oral History interview**

**Ida Smith with Nicki de Hoog**

**Interview date: 25 November 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2011, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Ida Smith [with Nicki de Hoog] for my Curtin University thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**I just want to start with your name and your birth date please, Ida.**

Yes. My name is Ida Scott Smith and I was born on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 1919.

**Thank you very much. Can you tell me a little bit about your family, your parents and any siblings please?**

Yes, well, we came from Scotland – Dundee, Scotland. We were nominated out here by my father's sister who had previously come, and we went to live with them for a while. My dad was a cabinetmaker and he got work pretty soon. We were doing quite all right until the Depression came. Oh, that's right, my brother and I; I have a brother, and he was a baby when we come and he's still alive. He lives in Gooseberry Hill. Anyway, we, yeah, when the Depression came then, that made things hard but they never really got on their feet very well. Things were difficult, you know, and they thought I was musical but they couldn't afford a piano. Mum had had a piano at home she used to play but they didn't bring it. So dad one day, brought me this violin home, I was 10, so I had a few lessons. Then he got out of work so that was the end of the violin, you know. [I was sixty (60) when I took it up again.] Anyway, they lived in that old house until he died. Mum died too, that's right, they lived there all that time. They never got back to Scotland, so that was a bit difficult. I wasn't born in Kalamunda.

**That's okay.**

I came from Dundee, Scotland.

**Yes. So, just a little bit more about your earlier years, just about your schooling and other entertainments when you were growing up.**

Well, most of our entertainment was from the Methodist Church, and it was great. The big day of the year was the day we came up here in the train to the Christian Endeavour picnic, you know (laughs), and Sunday School picnics. Really, we didn't need a lot. We used to do a lot of walking in the bush. In Bayswater where I lived, there was bush everywhere, you know, and there were wildflowers everywhere. We just had an ordinary sort of a life. I went to the Bayswater State School and then I went to Perth Girls for one year, and then mum got me into a business college where you could go and get half tuition for nothing if you went early in the morning and did all the cleaning up and then stayed late after (laughs) emptied ink wells and things. I used to go home filthy; I was fourteen (14) by then, you know. Anyway, I was doing quite well on a half tuition but I was going down one day to this college and we didn't have a car, we had to run everywhere down to the station, you know. So I was going down the station and there was a man lived up the top of the hill and he came, "would you like a job, Ida?", "oh, yes please," I said. So that was at the Government Print Office. I was there for seven (7) years and it was just like being in jail really, (laughs) and this old man at the top of the hill knew everything I was doing, "who's that you're going out with?" you know, and all this. Really, things were awful in those days, especially in the Depression because you thought, you had to do everything, your private life and everything. I mean, he really, he wasn't a very nice man as I discovered after but, you know, he never did anything to me except once I was sick. I didn't go to work and mum said, "you'd better go up and tell him." So I went and his wife was out and he said, "give us a kiss, Ida." So I ran, bolted

downstairs. You had to be very careful and he; I mean, now, you'd be jailed or something for carrying on like that.

(5:06)

So anyway, I stayed there 'til the war and then you could get a job anywhere then, so I got a job in a chain store that was in Hay Street called Selfridges, in the office there.

Then I got married [on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1942] and then we had to go to Kojonup after that because Les was in the Post Office, and he came home from the War, you know. Then we had Nicki. [Nicki was born 29<sup>th</sup> January 1949. She was six (6) months old when we went to Kalamunda]. We lost a baby at Kojonup; that's right. This was rather strange. We were there for two (2) and a half years and I got pregnant as soon as he came home really. I went to the doctor there and he said, "oh, come back at the end of the eighth (8<sup>th</sup>) month and don't mollycoddle yourself," with the result that I had a premature baby and he died. Then it was ages before I got pregnant with Nicki. Oh, we did a big cycling tour; that's right. We went from Kojonup to Albany and then up through Walpole and up to, oh, right up to, you know, five hundred (500) and something miles, and I got pregnant on the way. Everyone says I was very clever on a bike (laughs), but we did stop sometimes. So that's why she's [Nicki] never stopped. She's [Nicki] always on the run. And then we went to, that's right we couldn't get a house then, Les was transferred to Perth and we had to stay with mum, and then I saw this advertisement for ten (10) acres with a house for re-erection. The house had come from one of the old mining towns, and there was a man in Kalamunda, the Sargent's; I don't know whether you have ever heard of them.

**Yes.**

Mrs Sargent was a musician and he was a builder and he erected it, you see. Then in, it was about, I think you [Nicki] were about five (5), or six (6) when we, oh, when we added on to it. It was when Carol was born [18<sup>th</sup> April 1955], that's right, you must've been six (6). We added on to it and it was quite nice then really. We sold, we were left with four (4) and a half acres, we must've sold five (5) acres and we didn't even get enough to buy a Morris Minor (laughs). When I think of it now, that was beautiful land, wasn't it, really.

NdH: Exquisite.

So anyway, that was why I chose to live in Kalamunda but we always liked it. We always liked the hills and Les was very fond of the bush, wasn't he Nicki, because he was brought up on the group settlements, if you know anything about that, and he loved wildflowers and, you know, he was in his element there but he worked hard because he put in a big orchard. It was only a little house but Nicki was a bit of a wanderer and so he chopped down trees and made a fence. It must've been about half an acre.

NdH: Yeah, half an acre I reckon.

Slats like that.

NdH: He chopped palings with an adze out of trees and made a paling fence all the way round the back garden.

And it was this way so that she couldn't climb, you know, to keep her in and all that. Yeah, he worked terribly hard. He also had a bullet in his back which people thought

I was going to be a widow when I was about forty (40), and he lasted 'til he was ninety (90) (laughs). He was a great, we've been very fortunate really in our marriage and everything.

### **So how did you meet Les?**

Oh, well, I met him at a tennis club. It was strange, I had another boyfriend and we had been going out. We didn't live together like they do now. You just went and we'd been going out for two (2) and a half years but it was getting, you know, so we split up and I was thinking, "I'll be an old maid, nobody will want me." Mum said, "go on off to that tennis club," and I was about twenty (20), that's right. So off I went and there's this boy, he came over from Vic Park and he had been shot in the back.

(10:13)

He went out, cos he lost his mum early. He went out shooting with these boys down near where Nicki lives now, near Pinjarra, and somebody shot him. Well, the boy that shot him, he didn't mean to of course, he was another Les and he was, oh, he was terribly upset of course. Anyway, they never removed the bullet, it stayed with him until he died and it was about an eighth of an inch from his spine, down the bottom. So this Les, this other Les, tried to; in the meantime he'd shifted from Vic Park to Bayswater and he tried to do something to help my Les. So he asked me to come over to the tennis club and he used to ride over on his bike from Vic Park and he was at the tennis club. I was a rotten player. I've never been good at sport (laughs), so somehow or other we got together and I often say, "poor old Les, he got a bullet and then he got me for sixty eight (68) years" (laughs). Yeah, so that's how we met, and it was good. So it just goes to show, if I had have married that other man who was a nice man, but because I stopped going with him I started learning singing then and I wouldn't have had the life I've had, 'cos music makes such a difference to your life, doesn't it? You know, gets you in. Anyway.

(NdH: It's like music's like a link, isn't it, all through your life.

It is.

NdH: Like the violin when you were little.

Yes.

NdH: And granny played the piano. Her mother played the piano without any lessons, just completely intuitively.

Yes, and dad was,

NdH: He had a lovely voice.

When I got the violin, he used to sit and play it by ear.

NdH: That's pretty amazing.

Yeah, it was good. They never had a chance. They were both musical and they reckon, yeah, mum was thirty six (36) and he was forty (40), and they wouldn't join a choir 'no, we're too old' (laughs). Now, Nicki runs choirs, she runs choirs for old people. I'm the oldest (laughs). No, I'm not, John's the oldest, that's right, he's ninety five (95) nearly as he keeps on telling us.

NdH: And dad wrote a song for your 21<sup>st</sup>,

Oh, dad wrote a song for my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday,

NdH: -and played it on the guitar.

And played it for my-, that's right, yeah. It's been a very big thing, and I think you really are led, you know. I mean, if I'd have married Johnny, it would've been so different. His wife, they've had a really good life together because she was like him. They didn't go in for any of the arts or anything whereas Les painted, you know, he did all these pictures and all that stuff. So I've been very fortunate.

**So you've come to Kalamunda. What are your earliest memories of Kalamunda and the town site?**

Well, the town site, I think Nicki's written that down (background noise) what it was like. There was Thompson's general store there and Crabb's, which is now IGA, and I think it's still owned by Crabb's. There was a chemist here, Stove's butcher, but in those days there was no Cash and Carry there were houses there.

NdH: Oh, yes, that came later.

This shop came a little bit later, Hastings, I think they've still got it there, a drapery shop. Is that still there?

**No it's not there.**

This was Haynes Street, that's right.

NdH: There was a really old news agent. You had to step down steps to get into it.

That's right. The newsagent was there.

**What's between the corner and there?**

I don't know.

NdH: I don't know, I can't remember. It was like-

**Central Court maybe?**

Oh, it's probably like, yeah. Railway Road. The post office was up where?

NdH: There.

That's right, Mead Street, Post Office. Now wait a minute, I think, post - - -. Railway Road there, Haynes Street – yeah, post office. You know where the big shopping thing is, the post office was there. Now where's the pub?

(15:13)

NdH: Right next door, the pub.

That's right. The post office was there and the pub was there and on the corner here there was a deli, that's right, opposite Thompsons. Right, a big deli there. The fruit and veg man, he had a stall-

NdH: A caravan.

Yeah, a caravan. That was Mr Rhodes, was his name. And this was Stove's and this was Bavistock's butchers, that's right and you had to go to both of them or they'd get offended (laughs). You had to go one, one week-

NdH: You can imagine. Isn't that hilarious, two (2) butchers in one tiny town.

**It's funny.**

NdH: It was very unusual.

Yeah. We got very friendly with, we were really pioneers up there, with this family called the Harris'. Now, do you know Jill Wilmot at all? Jill, oh, what's her name now?

NdH: Fran.

Fran, I mean. Fran, oh, what on earth's her name.

NdH: I can't remember.

She married; Fran, anyway, it doesn't matter. Well, Mr Wilmot, he came as a Methodist minister up there and Jill married Ian Harris. Well, Ian's parents and us, we got very friendly and Les and George Harris, they lived at the top of Lesmurdie Road and – no, not at the top, about halfway up. We all got very friendly and George worked in the Post Office, the same as Les, so they used to go up and down on the bus, you know. What was I going to say about the Harris'? They were very prominent in Kalamunda.

NdH: And very musical.

Yeah, they were a lovely, lovely family. You sort of made friends for life in those days. It's different now, life's so fragmented, you know. Yeah, we had lovely times, and they had a piano, George could play. He could play anything by ear and he started a Repertory Club up there in 19- it was about 1954, I think; and I've got some pictures of that. I don't know whether you'd be interested in those.

**Yes definitely.**

I did find those.

NdH: That's Mrs Harris, there.

**Oh, okay.**

NdH: Look at these.

Oh, the first one was "To Kill a Cat" by A. A. Milne, and then they had another A. A. Milne one, "Mr Pimm Passes By". I don't know which is which, but that's Les; that's right. That's Lona. This is Roy Thompson who ran the grocery store; that's Joe Savage. This is me, that's Lona there. Anyway, I can't remember the name of the first pantomime.

NdH: Sinbad.



Sinbad! Good on you! Sinbad! That's right. There's me, there's Lona, Mrs Harris. We had a very clever lady lived up there too, a clever couple called the Sheridan's. Pam Sheridan, she used to make up the pantomimes, and we had everybody, you know. I'll always remember. There were the two (2) butchers in it and I remember the other one saying, "you butcher!" (laughs). They were good.

NdH: Pantomimes were wonderful. I looked forward to them all year.

I know. She said one day, came out, I was something or other and she come running up, "mummy, you were the second best" (laughs). The other one must've been a bit younger than me (laughs); I was about thirty nine (39) or something.

### **Where were the pantomimes held?**

In the Agricultural Hall.

### **Okay.**

Yep, that's Pam Sheridan, there's Les [referring to photos]. Oh, I used to get furious with him. I had Carol, a baby, he was out over blooming night with these rehearsals and I'm home there trying to get all the nappies dry (laughs).

(20:00)

Anyway, never mind, I didn't divorce him (laughs). This is the little house we built. The only thing that was solid about it was the brick chimneys (laughs). There's Nicki, she's with my friend that came to the orchestra a couple of weeks ago. That's her, and all her people came-

NdH: And granny's there.

There's mum and that's my dad.

NdH: And this is a great big mound of clay dug out of the ground to make a well.

Yes, yes.

NdH: But never worked.

No, you got about that much water in it about once a year (laughs). It was 40 feet deep. I tell you, Les must've had a very, very strong constitution because, you know, they were all saying, "oh, he won't last long". Yeah, so that was that, that was the Repertory Club.

### **How long did that last for?**

Well, I don't know. It was still going and then, like that was in 1962 then. Les saw – I saw the ad in the paper actually that the Methodist Church wanted a layman to run their children's home, and he'd always wanted to do that sort of work, so he put in and got it. We left, and it was still going then but I don't think it went much longer. I think it collapsed and then started again. Now what do they call it?

NdH: KADS [Kalamunda Dramatic Society] they call it.

That's right, yes; but it was a great thing and they all worked hard, and Les wrote plays there and I wrote things for the church. Do you remember the Cavalcade of Song?

NdH: How could I ever forget.

Yes, yes. I wrote, it went from, I wrote this from the 1890s, different songs, you know. And present day was 1950 something, I found it, and present day was the song (laughs). Oh, yeah, we had all the people in the church there and, of course, the church was turned into a hall 'cos you didn't have a hall then. Anyway, this is funny, 1920s there was a song and it was called, *Roll 'em Girls, Roll 'em*. (Singing) *'Everybody roll 'em, roll 'em down and show your pretty knees'*. And at the quarterly meeting of the church, I was told I wasn't allowed to have that. I wasn't allowed to have *Roll 'em Girls, Roll 'em*, so we had *Last Night on the Back Porch* which was much more- (laughs).

NdH: Suggestive.

Suggestive. Oh, dear. And the next – and this is honestly, honest to God, the next night at church [was all about] Jezebel.

NdH: I know.

Yeah, he must have thought of me (laughs). Oh, dear. Anyway, that was that; we were both madly into everything we could be in. He was out one night and I was out the next, you know, pretty awful. We had one night though where we would say we've both got to stay home at least one night a week where we were all at home, so we did that. Anyway, they all grew up.

NdH: We did. One of my earliest memories is of being taken to a birthday party in a cardboard carton on the handle bars of dad's bike. I'm sitting in the box and he rode me in to the girl Rooney, Valerie Rooney's, birthday party and all the kids came out to see the spectacle because they all had cars (laughs).

That's right, yes.

### **How old were you?**

NdH: I was only about six (6), I think, or seven (7).

Yes, well, you could've been. It was before we had a car so you must've only been about five (5) I think, or something, I don't know. [referring to notes] Yeah, yes; that's right. How we got involved in the church was, we got to know a family down Stanhope Road called the Thomas' and - Do any of them still live – oh, yeah. Heather still lives.

NdH: She lives in Forrestfield, I think.

(25:00)

Munroe is her name.

NdH: I don't think she lives in Kalamunda, not for a long time.

None of the others live there.

NdH: Rosie, I'm not sure. Anyway, they had a big orchard. He was very famous, Jack Thomas, because he invented the fruit grader, the Arlington Fruit Grader. And it did things that no other method had ever done before and so he started an engineering works in Welshpool-

That's right.

NdH: - and sent them all over the world.

Now see, there's a bit of history. Anyway, we got to know them and the girls were all friends, and it was through them taking Nicki and Robyn to the Methodist Sunday School that we got involved in the Methodist Church, you know. Yeah, she'd come up in her old car, didn't she, pick them all up-

NdH: Plymouth-

-and take them to Sunday School (laughs). Oh, dear, and then of course we still didn't have a car when it was time for Nicki to go to school so - what did we do? Yes, we did.

NdH: I used to walk to the bus stop.

That's right. The poor little thing, she had to walk. Do you know Hinkler Road at all?

**Yes.**

Well, we had to walk. We were about, I suppose it would be, I don't know what the street is that goes down the side of Mrs Hodgson's place. King Street?

NdH: Gladstone Road and King.

Yeah.

NdH: Gladstone Road went round the back and King went down to -

Well, we were sort of just past King Street, that's right. We used to have to walk right down to the end of Hinkler Road to -

NdH: To Mundaring Weir Road.

Mundaring Weir Road and she was only six (6), you know, and she'd have to come up. So I'd say to Carol, 'come on, we'll go and meet the girlies', and she was in the pram and they'd all trail up Hinkler Road, having great arguments (laughs). There was this little girl, poor little thing; oh, I'd better not tell you because you might know her mother or something.

NdH: Well, just don't say her name.

Anyway, they were always having all these arguments and Nicki came home and she says this girl's name. She says, 'that Seventh Day Adventists and Catholics are the best'. That's the poor little girl. Her father was a Catholic and her mother was a Seventh Day Adventist so, of course, she said the Methodists were- (laughs). Oh, dear, and I always think of that: the Seventh Day Adventists. We did get a car and then I had to learn to drive it. I used to take them into school then and Robyn [born on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1950]; there's only sixteen (16) months between Nicki and Robyn and

then I had another great gap of five (5) years. Talk about family planning, it didn't go according to plan, but never mind.

NdH: Now for the great historical event of your licence,

**My licence.**

NdH: Taking out the Shire fence (laughs). The Shire was here on Canning Road and mum, backing in, just didn't quite make it and took out the fence (laughs).

I was pregnant with Carol and we came up here and the road sort of sloped down and he said, 'now, you've got to back over', and I backed straight into the fence. 'I'm sorry, no you can't have it'. So I didn't get it then until Carol was eight (8) months old, that's right. I eventually got it and all these lessons, Les would take me out, you know, backing. Oh dear, never mind. I've got to do it again soon, I got my letter. Yeah, the Thomas family, we got involved in the church and got very involved in the church. That was good too because there was such, you know, there weren't so many distractions and your whole life, the church and the Harris's. Oh, and there was another family up there too, very musical, apart from the Sheridan's, Mr Magistro.

NdH: Joe Magistro.

He was a violinist and we all used to get together and have little musical evenings.

It was really lovely. We didn't spend a lot of money because nobody had a lot. It was a great life up there, and we missed it when we went but that was something that Les had always wanted to do, so that fulfilled him, you know.

(30:06)

We were there for twenty two (22) and a half years until we retired and then, of course, Kalamunda was so different. Well, while we were there too, in the church, Les with a man, called Jim Hunt, they ran the youth group. And Les, he made up a review. It was enormous; it was in 1959 and ran for three (3) nights in the Kalamunda Agricultural Hall. It involved every person in that church, I think. Everybody had a job to do and there were about over forty (40) kids in the youth club and they all had something in this review; and it was great. I don't think any of those young people, they're not young now.

NdH: Pauline Beazley's probably out there.

Pauline. You know Pauline? Pauline Young.

**I do, I interviewed Pauline for this project.**

Oh.

NdH: She was in the youth group.

**Oh, okay.**

Yes, she was one of the no, it wasn't Pauline. She wasn't one of the main -

NdH: Yes, she was.

Was she one of the main ones?

NdH: Yes, and Bill Harris's-

Valerie Earp.

NdH: Valerie, yes.

That's right, so Pauline was. I'd forgotten about that. It went non-stop because they'd have one item in front of the curtains while the others were; and of course, there was no modern things like, you know, you all had just fix things up underneath and we went all over the world. Nicki and Judy Hunt you sang *Little Chinese* -

NdH: Mandarin.

*Mandarin*, that's right; and Carol was too little to sing then; that's right. The Hunts, they were a good family up there and they went to the church too but they left then, after us. Yeah, that was a great thing. I've lost the jolly programs and everything, you know. I had all these programs; it's so annoying. Then the CWA Choir; that commenced. It was called Kalamunda Gooseberry Hill, in 1955, and there was a Mrs Utting from Lesmurdie. She conducted it and she had only learnt through the Summer School, you know. Anyway, we had Ming blue skirts and yellow blouses (laughs). They must've looked awful (laughs). We were all about; how old was I then? How old was I? I can't remember, thirty (30) odd anyway, about thirty four (34) or something. Anyway, then she left and there was this lady who lived on the escarpment at Gooseberry Hill, Astrid Colebatch. Now that's a very famous name, Colebatches, in WA and she was a real lady and she took us then, and here's a photo of us then.

NdH: Gone are the Ming blue skirts.

But we got different dresses, they were pale blue. This is Mrs Colebatch, she was really a lady, you know.

NdH: She was a gorgeous person.

This lady is Mrs Gorrie. She was another beautiful lady.

NdH: I loved her.

That's my friend, Gwen Griffiths who used to play for me, that's me; that's Mary Wood, and she was great on drama. I can't remember these other, oh, there's Mrs Lewis. See, they're all gone. They're all gone except me. They are! Amazing, isn't it? We won everything.

**Oh, that's good.**

And also, the CWA had a drama group and we won everything there too. Mary Wood, she ran the drama group and it wasn't bad, was it Nicki?

NdH: It was fantastic. The thing about Kalamunda, I think, you know how some towns just gather around a certain element in society, well, it was almost like, a lot of those people were mad artists and sort of slightly renegade kind of people but people who wanted somewhere quiet, and it was a very creative-

It was.

NdH: Place. It was like, there were all these famous artists who lived around about, in their early years.

That's right.

NdH: So there were painters and musicians, and very often they were migrant families and it was their children then, who went on to become very good musicians, writers, painters etc. But it was a very creative community.

(35:12)

What about that man, you know, those ones that lived out. You know Brian Smith?

NdH: Oh, yes.

Brian Smith's sister was married to this artist-

NdH: Oh, Guy Grey-Smith?

No, not him.

NdH: He was around too.

The man I mean, he, oh, he did sculptures and everything. I can't remember his name; but the two (2) girls, when we used to have these parties and all that. I can't remember their names, what a shame. Oh, never mind. Anyway, it is quite true what you're saying, Nicki, there were a lot of people there that just loved doing things. It wasn't just social, but it was a very nice community. It wasn't, you know, like it wasn't all avant-garde or anything, it was quite natural; yes, really nice. The CWA Choir, that was pretty good. Then I left of course and I joined the Metropolitan CWA, and we were even better. We beat them then (laughs). Oh, dear. That went on and then the CWA, the Metropolitan CWA Choir, our leader she formed what was called, well she was also the organist in Wesley Church, and then she formed the Wesley Tuesday Singers and we all left the CWA and became the Wesley Tuesday Singers. And I went to that until about three (3) years ago when Les got sick. Then Evelyn, that was her name, she died and so that was the end of the Tuesday Singers but we still meet. We met last week and that was really good.

**So with the CWA Choir, I just have a question. Was that your only involvement in the CWA?**

Yes. Oh, we had to go to the meetings. You had to go to three (3) meetings a year but oh, and then there was the drama group as well; but apart from that I wasn't,

**You weren't involved in any other activities.**

But I mean, look what they've done now. From that small beginning they've got that big centre in Kalamunda, and we just used to meet in the RSL Hall, you know. I mean, it all helps, doesn't it?

NdH: Mum's advice to me as a young girl, I remember, is there's more to life than preserving fruit (laughs).

We used to have to do it because-

NdH: I know, but you used to cry.

It all came on it all came on New Year's, Dad was so keen on his orchard, you know, it all came tomorrow. Never mind!

**So there were different aspects of work you could do in the CWA?**

Yeah. I didn't like when we all transferred from the CWA to the Tuesday Singers, I didn't bother about going back, but I'm not saying they didn't a good job, they did. It's just other people have got different talents and different ways of doing things. I mean, I think they're a great organisation; and what they used to do was wonderful. They'd have these great big festivals and people would come from all over the country with these little groups, and it was a big competition.

NdH: They still do, mum.

Yes, it's not a competition now though.

NdH: No, it's not a competition.

It was a competition.

NdH: Glenys goes. I live in Dwellingup and we have a CWA there.

Oh, yeah, and they all come and it's really lovely. And then they'd have the drama group. Well, we went up to Geraldton and Les got his holidays and, that's right, well, I went with them, you know; we won everything there. I was the most outstanding actress (laughs).

NdH: You were.

I got a trophy. I don't know where that is either now (laughs).

NdH: I remember what it looked like.

It was a cake stand. Oh, dear; but they were all innocent sort of things. We didn't drink; hardly any of us drank. The Harris's never drank. We'd have all these parties and we'd never have any drink. And at the Repertory Club, George was very strict. He was the president; no drink at any of our parties or anything, you know. It was all so innocent and lovely. But anyway, what else do you want to ask me?

(40:11)

**I'm not sure. I think you've covered just about everything Ida because you've talked about the train.**

The train. I did say the train went up and down, yes, that's right. That was a bit of a shame that they stopped that. Yes, I do remember the train line in operation. Some of the local identities of the area, I'll tell you some of them. There were the Harris' and then there was a man called Con Beazley, who is Pauline's uncle.

NdH: And Kim Beazley's uncle.

Yeah, and Kim Beazley's uncle. Con was a very unusual sort of a man. He never married but he did a lot of good quietly, and he was very religious, you know. He was a well known identity. And the butcher, of course, Mr Stove.

NdH: Mr Stove.

Mr Stove the butcher (laughs). The different ministers we had: we had Mr Burt at first and then Harry Freeman, that's right; and then Frank Wilmot. What's Frannie's name? She still lives there.

NdH: Blythe.

Blythe. That's right. Do you know her?

**Yeah, I do.**

She was Frank's daughter, that's right, so she still lives there.

**It sounds like Mr Stove was a bit of character.**

NdH: Mr Stove, he certainly was a character.

Yes, he was.

NdH: He used to give every child at the primary school a slice of polony every day if they wanted to. You'd just nip in the door and he'd give you one. He was gorgeous.

His daughter and Robyn became very friendly. They lived on Gray Road, it was just sort off Watsonia, down there; but they've all gone. What else have we got here, "Are you involved in any community groups?" Yes, well you know I am. Nicki runs this thing. "What do you feel is special about Kalamunda?" I still think it's very special. The whole of the hills is very special. I mean, here – mind you, it's not the same. Darlington, I can remember when we were, when we started our CWA Choir, they had a good choir here. There's not that involvement now. I think it's because it's so easy to go further afield, whereas we couldn't, you know, nowadays people are rushing around all over the place, aren't they? I must show the photo too. We are in the seniors, you are.

NdH: I think that growing up with parents that were very aware of the environment means that I have this wealth of knowledge that I don't realise other people don't have. I know all the names of all the wild flowers and I'm also very aware of the ones that have gone, that you don't see anymore, you know, hardly at all. And birds. I mean mum was - you'd hear a scream from the kitchen thinking something terrible's happened but it's just mum's seen a bird. She was always very keen on deciding what all the birds were, so we looked them up.

I love birds.

NdH: And animals. There were always lots of lizards. And bush fires, I remember.

Oh, bush fires.

NdH: Terrible bush fires. Every year, dad coming in black with all these stripes down his face, where the sweat would leave these white stripes on his black face. All they had were knapsack sprays and hessian bags and then when the water ran out and they couldn't dampen the bag, then they would bust with green twigs, you know, with big green boughs off a tree. There were an enormous number of fires. It just seemed like every summer there would be. Dad would be out -



(45:01)  
Big fires!

NdH: - fighting a big fire somewhere.

Yes, and it wasn't organised then. There wasn't like,

NdH: A volunteer fire brigade.

A volunteer fire brigade, they just went. (showing photo in newspaper)

NdH: That's the choir that mum was in.

**Oh, okay, very nice. You're still in a blue uniform, Ida.**

NdH: Still in blue. She can't get away from it (laughs).

It's called,

NdH: The Stirling Silver Singers.

**Very good, and there you are at the front.**

Yes. So that's what I do on Thursdays.

NdH: Continuing their tradition.

**I'll ask you some of your memories, Nicki, about Kalamunda. Just a little bit, if you want.**

NdH: Sure. I mean, I just loved it, I was absolutely brokenhearted to leave there and what I do – what I can recall is, that it's the longest period of my life that I remember. It's only ten (10) years but it seems to me like it was at least half of my life. That's how it feels to me. Like that was the whole of my childhood somehow, and it stretched out like infinitely long in my mind and in my memories and I mean, we all knew everybody in town. There wouldn't be anyone that you would see in town that you didn't know.

That's true.

NdH: Unless they were like a 'new' person. And if there was a new person in town, everyone would have to find out who it was and where they lived and what they were doing there.

The other day, when. Do you know Margaret Edwards at all? She used to be Margaret Owen. Well, she's an old lady now and she lives next door to the church in those units, you know. She was a Tuesday Singer and the other day we all met up and went to her place and then we caught the bus down, and we went past our old Stanhope Road and I said to Margaret, 'you know Nicki was really excited when we got a light on our corner'. She was telling everybody. It was about a mile away, 'we've got a light on our corner' (laughs).

NdH: And the other thing that's very vivid in my memory is that all of us at primary school wanted to live on the big St Emilies Road; you know, the hill going up the hill

where all the big, beautiful houses were. We used to dream of living in one of those houses and we would try and plan accidents where we'd be taken in by the person who owned those big, beautiful houses. Then one day, the most amazing miracle happened is that I got invited to Lyn Smedley's birthday party and lo and behold, she lived in one of the beautiful houses.

Did she? I didn't know that.

NdH: Right next door to St Emilies. They were only renting it and there were two things I remember about that birthday party: one was that we were told her father was a hypnotist, we were terrified, (laughs) and her mother used to soak bread in milk and then cook it again in the oven, because it was good for her children's teeth. You know, you remember these weird things (laughs) and so, 'oooh, milk bread'.

She was always at parties. She went to one, Barry Sue,

NdH: Who is a very famous person. His father's Jack Sue.

Yes. Well, they were famous people too that lived in Kalamunda. Nicki was in Barry's class at school and he invited her, I think you were about twelve (12) then, and Les; she didn't like rice and he was saying, 'you have to have flied lice, you know Nicki' (laughs). 'Bali Sue', he'd say, 'going to Bali Sue's place'. Yeah, he was another famous man that lived in Kalamunda.

NdH: He was there for a long time.

Here's what we'd wear, you see: act, belong, commit, ABC (referring to choir article in newspaper).

NdH: Healthways.

She was running - how many choirs at the beginning of the year until you had that awful accident?

NdH: Five (5).

Five (5) choirs and then she had an accident and broke her Achilles tendon.

NdH: Never mind. I remember Susan Withers' beautiful house.

Oh yes, they had a lovely house.

NdH: I loved that house. There were very unusual buildings, all over Kalamunda. People who had created buildings that didn't look like our aunty's who lived down in Mt Lawley and things like that, so there were houses that were built around rocks and through gullys.

Yes.

(50:10)

NdH: You know, people were very imaginative and creative and also people, generally, there weren't a lot of rich people in Kalamunda in those days.

No, there weren't.

NdH: So people were very creative about what they did with their money too.

Yes, that's right.

NdH: I remember all of those very unusual houses that we used to go to, to visit each other.

Yes, yes, they were. Well, the Harris's, they built their own, you know.

NdH: And the school [Kalamunda Primary School]. The school, it just kept being added onto and added onto, and added onto. When I went there, only those prefab classrooms that are at the front were there. Then there was a gravel cricket pitch and then there was the caretaker's house, and the caretaker lived next to the school. We were absolutely terrified of him.

Were you?

NdH: Because he used to growl all the time. We were scared we'd do something wrong.

Oh, and there was the school shop.

NdH: There was a little shop on the corner of. What was the street the school's in?

**Heath Road.**

NdH: Heath Road and the next road.

Boonooloo Road.

NdH: And there was this little shop there.

It's still there.

NdH: And then over the road there was an old man who made iced lollies.

Did he?

NdH: Yes. We were never allowed to have one (laughs).

Oh, sorry (laughs). Deprived, oh, dear, that's a shame.

NdH: There was no such thing as political correctness or sensitivity towards children's feelings. They weren't kind of seen as people in a way.

No, I know.

NdH: By the system, and I remember the little boy Linklater, his dog used to follow him to school every day and they were always saying, 'get that dog out of here'. It was quite a big black dog and one day, some person came in and shot this dog.

Oh, isn't that terrible.

NdH: And put it in a sack, and I remember this little boy looking in this sack and I thought my heart was going to break, you know. It was sort of like perfunctory, 'oh, it's just a dog'. There wasn't the same kind of sensitivity to children's feelings.

No, there wasn't.

NdH: I never got over that. It was like dry mouthed horror for me forever.

Yes, how awful.

NdH: It was.

Yes, I'm always glad we did take the house at Kalamunda, because it gave our three (3) girls a different sort of an aspect on life, even though we left when they were quite young, but I think even Carol – she was only six (6) when we went. I think sometimes that must've affected her because we were in the bush there and then we went round, there was hundreds of kids. We had to live on the property and there weren't hundreds of kids but there were forty (40), fifty (50) children in different cottages; and they were always at our place.

NdH: There was more than that. There was twelve (12) in each cottage.

Oh, that's right. Well, there were only four (4) cottages when we went and then he built the other two (2).

NdH: Oh, yes, that's right.

But I think that little bit of time that they all had in the bush gave them.

NdH: Oh, yes; Victoria Park seemed incredibly sterile compared to where we'd come from.

Impersonal.

NdH: Yeah, dry sandy.

And we never sort of made the same friends. For instance, in the street where we lived, like we did at Kalamunda, because we were all there as kind of pioneers, you know. That period, that twenty two (22) and a half years we were there, it's funny but I don't think of it a lot.

NdH: Me either. No.

I mean it was his work, and he did a great job and he got the OAM and everything for his work, but it kind of, like I think about Bayswater when I was a child and about Kalamunda and that bit seems. I know it was a good work and everything but it wasn't easy either, you know, and it seems to have. I haven't sort of carried on with – except Evelyn Thompson, but that was really through the singing more than; you know, they lived in Vic Park. And of course, our sister-in-law, they lived down the road there. Well, they've gone now and, you know, cos Les lived in Vic Park, that's right, just down the road from where we went.

(55:10)

NdH: When he was a boy.

When he was young. Yes, it's funny that. Here we are here, so we've done our dash for the year. We only have to break up now, don't we? Poor old Nicki hasn't been able to go but the lady who really started this, she's a professor of music and she's been taking us. And I mean, it's not like the sort of singing we used to do in Wesley Church or I was in WASO Choir for a long time, but it's enjoyable. We all love it. We don't make a bad noise.

NdH: No, a very good noise.

Yes (laughs). Oh, they're so pleased. It started as a health thing, wasn't it, really, and they got the Silver Chain. Oh, and there was another thing dad did too, he helped to run, that was another thing. This Con Beazley, he was a representative for the Silver Chain in Kalamunda and he got dad on the committee and they used to run a Flower Day up in Kalamunda. I don't know whether'd you remember.

**No.**

You wouldn't remember, but in Perth.

NdH: Oh, Flower Day used to be just beautiful in Perth.

In Perth, they had a Flower Day once a year in aid of the Silver Chain and all the banks, everything, would be decorated with flowers.

NdH: Each of the shops had one whole big window like a flower display.

Oh, it was absolutely beautiful.

NdH: With themes and everything.

Well, then, Les and Con they organised one in Kalamunda. I had a photo of that somewhere too but I don't know where that is now; and that was a big thing. I don't know what happened when Les left, whether they continued. That was about the last year we were there, we had this. Yeah, we were very involved really; but it was good. (telephone rings)

NdH: Sorry.

That's yours.

**Just going back to your comment about when you came back to Kalamunda when you said it had changed. How had it changed?**

Oh, too many houses. All the blocks were small, it seemed more like an ordinary suburb. Of course, we lived out a fair bit and also it was too expensive. It was much more expensive than the house we got over here, and this was more what we were looking for, something like we had before with a little bit of land around us. That's twenty nine (29) years ago, so we've been retired for twenty seven (27). Isn't it ridiculous! We were retired before you were born. Anyway, life's very interesting whatever you're doing. It's what you make of it.

**Yes, it is. Definitely.**

I've always been a Christian and that gets me through sometimes when things have been a bit up and down, but I'm very lucky too that I can still walk.

**And still do things that you want to do.**

Yeah, and if it wasn't for Jane, I wouldn't be able to go to the orchestra. I'm really not very good at all but I find it hard reading the things, you know, but it's good for me; and as long as I'm not being a nuisance I'll keep going as long as I can.

NdH: There was one house in Kalamunda that had a swimming pool.

Yes.

NdH: It was opposite Mrs Gorrie's and it was on the corner of Canning Road and Orange Valley Road, wasn't it?

Cotherstone Road.

NdH: Cotherstone Road.

Cotherstone Road, that's right.

NdH: And oh boy, we used to look longingly at that swimming pool.

One pool.

NdH: One pool.

Yeah, they had a pool. Oh, and there were ice works. I forgot about that.

NdH: The ice works, yes.

On the corner of Canning Road and Sampson Road, that's right.

NdH: We used to get the ice there for our fridge. You know, you'd put it in the top of the ice box.

Yes, that's right, the ice man would come. That was another thing too; because there wasn't any milk round, when I had Robyn I didn't have enough milk and they put her on to some powdered stuff and she came out in a terrible rash, so the clinic sister said, 'you'll have to get her on to cow's milk'.

(1:00:17)

So poor old Les, we didn't have a car, get on his bike every morning at six (6) o'clock and go up to the ice works to get the milk (laughs) and bring it down so I could feed the baby.

NdH: It was amazing.

Yes, it was, and he used to ride his bike then, then he'd go back up there at eight (8) o'clock or something and he'd hide his bike underneath a bush so he could bike (laughs).

NdH: First of all we did have a Coolgardie safe.

Oh, yes, we did.

NdH: You know, just a tin box with hessian which you would wet and keep the butter.

Yes, that's right. We didn't have a,

NdH: And then we got an ice box that you put a big block of ice in the top.

That's right.

NdH: And then we got a fridge after that.

We got a fridge eventually, yes, that's right. We got a telephone; that was really something special.

NdH: Everyone used to come and use our phone.

Yes.

NdH: And the school bus, it was just this unbelievable journey. You had late mornings and early mornings; so you either got on at the beginning of the circuit or at the end. We used to go all the way up Mundaring Weir Road, out to Pauls Valley and then turn around and come back, go out through Bickley, Piesse Brook, Pickering Brook and all the way back into Kalamunda and pick up all these kids. It was the most incredible journey, it used to take over an hour.

I know (laughs).

NdH: So we got to know where all the kids lived, you know, all the orcharding families who didn't actually belong in town.

That's right. What's that Italian family you were quite friendly with?

NdH: The Giglia's in Bickley.

Yes. Are they still there, I wonder, Giglia's?

**I think they might be.**

NdH: And the Conti's lived in our street.

Oh, the Conti's, yes, they were next door.

**So with those orcharding properties, did they come into town much or were they separate and socialised with each?**

NdH: Well, a lot of them were post-war migrant families from Italy, and they did tend to socialise with themselves. And you would find there would usually be a grandmother and a family, and then maybe a married older sibling or something; so there'd be quite a community. It wasn't generally a nuclear family with a mum and dad and a couple of kids. We didn't see them in town much.

No, no.

NdH: And they did eat so differently to us.

Yes, you used to tell me what they had.

NdH: I remember seeing olives for the very first time, and eggplant. I didn't know what that was, you know. They made their own bread which I found very astonishing.

And they used to have thick pieces of bread.

NdH: Yes, huge pieces of bread with eggplant in the middle.

Yes, yes.

NdH: But that was another thing too, is that mum would let us go at ten (10) o'clock in the morning on a Saturday and we wouldn't be back until late afternoon. We would walk and have picnics. We'd walk all the way down to Piesse Brook. We were just little kids, you know, and there was never the slightest fear for our safety or anything.

No, no. It was lovely, you know. It really was a lovely style of life for children, wasn't it?

NdH: Yeah, it was.

Yes.

**So were there many people out on Stanhope Road in South Kalamunda – many people lived out there?**

NdH: There weren't that many.

**There weren't that many?**

Oh, no.

NdH: Well, there was Mrs,

Hodson.

NdH: Hodson, who lived on the other side of the road opposite us, and us, and then there were some people, while we were this funny old lady built a house next door. Remember the little

Oh, that was Mrs Hodson's mother.

NdH: Oh, was it? Right.

They came from Scotland but then they died and then these funny people came next door.

NdH: That's right, then Hewy moved in. And there was a weekender opposite us, a tiny cottage.

That's right. They were allowed to put up these weekenders, and they put them all down Hinkler Road.



NdH: That's right.

Then down on the corner, I think the Thompson's lived there first.

NdH: The Lush's.

Roy Thompson lived there first and then they, Roy, his dad died or something and I don't know where he lived, and then the Lush's came that had the garage.

NdH: Another garage.

Yeah, up the top. Then around from them there was the Gavernasies' and the Thomas'.

(1:05:00)

NdH: Yeah. So most of the properties were really big. Mrs Hodson over the road and us were the only people in our stretch of road that didn't have, like a market garden or an orchard.

Yes.

NdH: We just had a tiny orchard for our own use but everyone else in our street had a production orchard where they sent their stuff to market and everything. That's how they lived.

That's right. And there was Mrs Griffiths who went up Gladstone Road.

NdH: She was in Gladstone Road and they had an orchard.

They had an orchard and then down that other road.

NdH: The Letitsia's.

Yes, and there were the Flynn's too. They were down near Thomas's. But we all knew each other, you know. And then in Lesmurdie Road, we could walk through to Lesmurdie Road, there were the Harris's and the Sharp's and, I can't remember. There were only two (2) or three (3) people lived up there.

NdH: All along the back of our property was the old railway line. They'd taken up the sleepers but they left all the metal dogs (dog spikes) that they used and because it was used as a bridle path,

That's right.

NdH: We would find horseshoes all the time. We always used to be taking them to school and banging them with the dogs for the percussion band.

Yes. Concussion band (laughs).

NdH: That's right.

Robyn came home, 'I'm in Mr Workman's concussion band' (laughs). They were a nice family. Actually, the teachers and all that, they were quite nice people except Mrs What's-her-name who made you.

NdH: Mrs Shook.

Oh, she wasn't nice, no. The other one who made you – because you weren't writing slopey.

NdH: Oh, Mrs Eaton?

Yes, she made.

NdH: I was terrified of her.

It was so ridiculous how they used to make kids all write exactly the same. I'll staple these up, you might find it useful.

**Thank you. All right; well, I'll finish the interview now, I think. If you've finished?**

Yes.

**Thank you very much, Ida and Nicki.**

It was a pleasure

NdH: Pleasure.

Interview ends: 1 hour 7 minutes 12 seconds



Ida and Les' parents, with Ida's friend holding Carol Smith, and Ida standing on the clay heap dug to make the well behind their house in Stanhope Road, Kalamunda, 1950



Kalamunda Country Women's Association (CWA) choir



Steer's Newsagency, Haynes Street, Kalamunda on Flower Day for Silver Chain



Scene from Ali Baba



# ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

## ACT I.

- Scene 1.—Forest outside Bagdad.  
Scene 2.—Forest outside Robbers' Cave.  
Scene 3.—Forest outside Robbers' Cave.

## — INTERVAL —

## ACT II.

- Scene 1.—Market Place in Bagdad.  
Scene 2.—Courtyard of Ali Baba's Home.  
Scene 3.—Inside Ali Baba's Home.

Script and Lyrics adapted by Pam Sheridan and Joe Savage  
Stage Production ..... Joe Savage  
Musical Direction and Arrangements ..... Merv. Sheridan  
Decor ..... George Harris  
Backdrops ..... Les Smith, Sue Andersen, Janette Martin

Special Ballet Sequences presented by Courtesy of  
LINLEY WILSON SCHOOL OF DANCING

## ORCHESTRA—

Merv. Sheridan (piano) ..... Joe Magistro (violin)  
Tom Benn ('cello) ..... Neil Earp (saxophone)  
Bill Harris (trumpet) ..... Ken Simcock (drums)

## CHARACTERS (in order of appearance):

ALI BABA ..... Pat Hallahan  
FATIMA (Ali Baba's Wife) ..... Salona Harris  
CASSIM BABA (Ali Baba's Brother) ..... Milton Stove  
DONKEY (Front End) ..... Trevor Harwood  
(T'other End) ..... Peter Hatley  
ABU HASSAN (Robber Chief) ..... Herb. Baverstock  
JAFFA (First Lieutenant) ..... Fred Gibson  
Robbers ..... Barry Annetts, Gordon Fletcher, Bill McDonald  
Bill Hayden and Tom Sturman  
MORGIANA (Ali Baba's Slave Girl) ..... Sue Andersen  
SULIMAN (Ali Baba's Son) ..... Jim Seion  
MUSTAPHA (A Blind Cobbler) ..... Jock Burnside  
STREET SINGER ..... Vincent Walsh  
RENA (Cassim Baba's Wife) ..... Ida Smith  
AMA (Fatima's Lady-in-Waiting) ..... Dorothy Ryder  
CHILDREN OF THE CITY ..... Valerie Earp and Ian Harris

Stage Manager and Properties ..... Peter Hart  
Lighting ..... George Harris, Reg Bridges and John Simons  
Costumes ..... Ladies' Committee  
Make-Up ..... Pam Sheridan  
Choreography—Donkey Dances ..... Greta Harwood  
Morgiana's Dance ..... Sue Andersen

fruit & Veg.

1950's.

(50 → 61)

Mudway  
Weir Rd.

Railway Rd.

Thompson's  
General  
Store

Chinist

(later)

Hartnug's

Stove's  
Butcher's

(later)  
Clark  
and  
Canary

Haynes St

DELI

Hair  
dresser

Baker

Shack's  
Butcher's

Hotel

PO office

Methodist  
Church

Kostera's  
Garage

Newagar ?

?

Head St.

Shire

Canning Rd.

Crabb's

School

Doctor's  
House

**Oral History interview**

**Agnes Taylor**

**Interview date: 7 May 2011 and 31 July 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 7<sup>th</sup> May 2011 my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Mrs Taylor for my Curtin thesis project: The role of oral history to interpret a place.**

Just half a jiff I don't seem to be hearing that as loudly as I thought.

**So Mrs Taylor can you please tell me your full name and date of birth please.**

Agnes Muriel, it was Johnson, now Taylor on the 28 October 1915.

**And can you tell me a little bit about your family? What were your parent's names?**

My dad was August Johanson, he became naturalised to Johnson. Mum was Maggie Elizabeth Irvin, she was born in Victoria.

**And their birthdates, birth years?**

Her birth date was 19 November, I can't remember the other date.

**That's alright. You were telling me before about your parents coming to WA, so can you...?**

Coming to?

**Coming to...**

You want me to tell you? Dad was a Swedish sailor, he had to leave school at the age of eleven (11) because things were terrible in Sweden at that stage, it wasn't the country that it is now. They were very short of money. He had to work seven (7) days a week and some nights as well and then he decided that being a sailor would be a better way of living. And he was able to get on a little sailing ship from Helsingborg in Sweden and he stayed on sailing for quite a number of years and on one ship, it was only about a six hundred (600) oh I've forgotten the balance of them but a very little ship anyhow. And when he got to Australia the sunshine won his heart and he decided that he was going to jump ship. He waited his opportunity and not a word of English in his vocabulary and seven (7) shillings in his pocket he jumped ship at, it wasn't Fremantle harbour wasn't built then. He later, years later, helped build Fremantle. But what's the word I'm thinking of but anyway he stayed sailing for quite some time and then he became friendly with a family of, the husband had been a teacher, and they had a big family and they helped him very much with his English. Particularly a little girl of six (6) she helped him a lot. Later on I've got a book there that my older sister wrote about my dad; she'd been to Sweden and his relations couldn't get over how well he spoke English and how well he had adapted from Swedish.

What else did you want to know?

**How your parents met.**

Dad had been in Fremantle for quite some time and the gold rush was on and he went up to the goldfields quite often wheeling his possessions in a wheelbarrow, homemade wheelbarrow, sometimes it had a wooden wheel. My mother's brother had come over from Victoria to the goldfields as well, Kalgoorlie and mum had come over to keep house for him and dad happened to be staying at this boarding house that she was working and that's how they met.



(5:04)

They had never had any money (laughs) a whole lot of kids, eight (8) kids and no money but they did very well.

**So why did they decide to come to Kalamunda?**

Dad was working for woodcutters, very popular thing, he was at Pickering Brook and he got a parson was looking around for land for them and he told dad about this block of land in Lesmurdie. Dad borrowed the horse and sulky and they drove around to have a look at it, decided that yes it would do for them, thirteen (13) acres of virgin bush. I don't know how they did it but anyway they bought it I think he only had to pay ten dollars (\$10) or something on it. He certainly didn't have enough money to buy it; he didn't finish paying for it for years and years. But they both worked mighty hard on it and he built a shack to start off with, they had been married for ten (10) years before they actually started the house as it is today. They'd been in a humpy, you know hessian walls, you can't imagine what it would have been like. But anyway it wasn't until about 1910 I think when they started building the place as it was. It was still a shack, no linings and things, skillion roof, iron roof. They just worked terribly hard, the pair of them; dad didn't have any profession you see, leaving school so early, but he observed very carefully what everyone did and he very soon became very skilled at doing all sorts of jobs. And people mistook him as a builder, builder and contractor, that's what he was eventually. He just did marvellously well, he was very well respected. I've got Sue's little book there, I'll let you read it if you like. Dad wrote his memoirs but the wretched man who edited it for him put in a lot of his things, it's not dad talking at all, it's not dad as we remember him, he put in Finnish poetry and so on, you know this and that. It just upsets me, Susan wrote her bit and she said that it was really an introduction to dad's and I've got it there but I don't know how to go about how to get it republished and make it one thing. One of my granddaughters said she'd get it done but they're all so busy but anyway that was that. We were always very popular; you didn't know about Villa Maria, do you want me to tell you that yet? Will that fit in?

**Yes that will be fine.**

The original section of St Brigid's College, you know there's just the one original section that was the convalescent home for the repat after the First World War for one section. And the boys used to come up from there to our place to the piano, for a sing song around it, their voices would just about lift the roof, oh they'd come up there, lots of fun. And we had a table in the dining room that you could seat seventeen (17) around it but it must have been very fitting they'd play ping pong there, we never called it table tennis ever, it was always ping pong.

(10:11)

But the boys would come up there and they would play and I've got three (3) or four (4) older sisters and they had a bit of company but that part was very good.

**So just to let people know, your parent's house, your house growing up was opposite Villa Maria on Lesmurdie Road.**

Opposite Glen Avon.

**Just so people are aware of what goes where.**

Do you want me to put in Glen Avon in the story now?

**Yes if you like.**

There were two (2) Englishmen up here, Mr Brady and Mr Wheelwright, I'm not quite sure how they fitted in but Mr Brady was the Secretary for the Road Board for many, many years. I think they had something to do with the building of Glen Avon but I don't remember but it was the quarters for the staff of the hospital, the repat, Matron Bruton was in charge of it all I can see her quite clearly. I'm not sure for how many years that went on but then after the Army gave it up, after repat gave it up it was a boarding house. People came up to Lesmurdie for long weekends and all sorts of things; it was sort of a health resort. They'd come up by train to Kalamunda and come out to Lesmurdie the best way they could because there weren't taxis, they'd have friends come and get them. There was another boarding house up in Canning Road, they had a lovely horse and buggy, they used to meet their people at the station. I can't remember the name, being ninety five (95) has its disadvantages, but anyway there would be lots of people, lots of noise. You'd hear people, they'd go down to the falls and roundabout, there always seemed to be crowds of people around. As I said come up by train and sort of just fill in time.

**So was there a track from Kalamunda to Lesmurdie? Was it easy to get across to Lesmurdie?**

The road was there, a road yes, not the roads that they are today (laughs). What else was there, lots of activity, there were lots of boarding houses; you know you'd have them in for a couple of days or weekends, and so on like that. It was mainly a health resort in those days; it's hard to imagine it now. Where that wretched Coles is now that was lovely bush and so on and there were four (4) hostels there, I've written them down somewhere, St Elmo was one of them.

**I've heard of it yes.**

St Elmo. There were three (3) others but I can't remember the names, but that was all taken in there. A lot of us were upset that Kalamunda was being ruined. They wanted to pull that, dad built the church the Methodist church there in 1918 that was sort of a welcome home or something for all the boys who'd gone from here. But oh there was a great hue and cry, that wasn't to come down at all. Now Stuart Kostera has made it into his private residence.

**I've seen that.**

(15:00)

He went to Sunday school there and so did I and he said 'as long as he's alive it will never come down' because he had tremendous respect for dad and loved the church there as well.

**It's a beautiful building.**

Oh it is lovely, for someone who didn't have any training he was pretty marvellous really.

**So did he build many other stone buildings around Kalamunda and Lesmurdie?**

He built the stone wall in front of the hall, in Canning Road there. Not the gates, they've been done by someone else, you know very professional. There was

another one in Gooseberry Hill just around the corner here but I've forgotten the street, its only two (2) or three (3) streets away.

**Oh ok.**

But that was the main stone building that he did.

**Did he build your house?**

He built, he did every bit of our house. He and mum quarried the stone from the place roundabout, they were marvellous the pair of them they worked so hard. They just didn't have any money so they did the best they could and you can see the house took so long to build, you can see how he perfected the stonemasonry, the front of it is so different. They bought it in 1903 and it was ours until 19, dad died in 1961 and mum died in 1962. Joyce and Dick Price bought it in 1963 and they died in about 1994 I think, about that, and their daughter now possesses it. And she adores every stick and stone of it. If she were my youngest sister she couldn't care more and she comes up here to see me quite often, she's absolutely lovely. She's had some stone walls built...

**I noticed them, I drive past there every day to work and so I look in at the house.**

I must get her to let you come and have a look sometime.

**So I'd seen the stone walls.**

She was worried stiff, I love the one from the letterbox down but I hadn't seen the later one until last week. I was down there to lunch, and I said "oh Penny it's lovely", and she "Oh I'm so glad I was so afraid you wouldn't like it" (laughs). But she's planted so much stuff, the trees that we had of course have grown like mad; the garden's nothing like it was when we were there. Oh I meant to get a photo out with dad and I picking beans down in the garden. We had a big orchard and grew beans, grew everything and sent it off to market, in the early days before there was a carrier, darling old dad would have a yolk over and his two (2) things to carry to go to South Kalamunda station which was, do you know where South?

**No.**

Where Woolworths is, the road there, there's a road that goes up over the hill. Stupid me I can't remember the name of it (laughs), I know it as well as I know my own. But anyway he'd carry these bundles in, might have to make two (2) or three (3) trips and leave them there on the station with a note for the auctioneer. Nothing was ever stolen, imagine that these days, no interference whatever, just left all there. See how Kalamunda has changed, I mean the world has changed not only Kalamunda.

**So I'll ask a little bit more about your family, you told me you were born in Perth.**

I was born in Perth, Nurse Stockely's, I've forgotten the name of the street. Up here mum didn't have any help up here apart from her eldest, my eldest sister had to stay home from school sometimes to help.

(20:04)

There was a slight amount of bitterness between my two (2) sisters because one won a scholarship to Bunbury and the other one stayed home and helped mum but Susan did marvellously well. She travelled a lot, she hitchhiked in Russia and God knows where, various parts of the world. We all travelled quite a bit.

**So can you run through the names of your siblings?**

The names? Do you want the whole lot, right down?

**Yes right down.**

Elsie Mavis, Nora Margaret, Mabel Hilda, Doris Isabel, Conrad Irvin, Irvin was Mum's family name, Agnes Muriel, Kathleen Mary and Frank Cogan (laughs). How they didn't run out.

**Was there many years between each child?**

About an average of two (2) years, I should think, yes. Occasionally there was a three (3) year gap (laughs) three (3) between me and my sister and three (3) between Kath and the youngest one. My eldest brother was killed in the Malta during War he was in the Air force, silly darn War.

**I've got a question about your schooling, where did you go to school?**

I went to Lesmurdie School, it was out, you know where Lesmurdie School, not the present Lesmurdie School, at the end of Sanderson Road, there wasn't any road there then, it was a bush track but nearly down to Lesmurdie Road; where the Brownies meet I believe now. There were about fifteen (15) of us, something like that, the teacher had to teach from grade one (1) up to grade six (6).

**You had to walk all that way to and from school?**

Yes, oh golly walking didn't mean a thing. We used to walk from our house up to Grove Road, where Grove Road joins Canning Road, there used to be a little cottage there I forget whether it's still there, friends of the family Mr and Mrs Craig – Creg we used to call them. We called them Creg for years until we realised it was just their pronunciation (laughs). Oh we used to walk for miles and miles and miles, didn't think of anything. I'm sure the days were much longer then they are now, much, much longer. Oh we'd go out for miles out in the bush, that's another photo I meant to have out for you. Down in Lesmurdie at least Falls Road, there weren't any houses down there; I lived in England for seven (7) years and when I came back from England in 1960, I've got a photo of my two (2) sisters and my two (2) kids in Falls Road and it's just thick with wildflowers, absolutely lovely. Now there are wretched houses (laughs).

**Houses everywhere.**

I hate development but there you are.

**So did you go on to do high school after primary school?**

No I worked in the garden with my brother, dad was up in the goldfields hoping to make his fortune but he didn't. Oh you've no idea how ghastly that Depression was, people coming to the house to ask mum if she could give them anything. I remember one foreign chap, he had a foreign accent and he cried and said 'God

bless you lady, God bless you". Oh it was hideous that Depression, it lasted for too long.

**So you had enough work to do with sending all the vegetables to market?**

My brother and I, Con wanted to be an architect but we didn't have the money to send him off or anything.

(25:04)

Kath and Frank the two (2) younger ones won their secondary and tertiary education with scholarships. Frank turned out to be an extremely good doctor and Kath spoke four (4) languages, French and German, what was the other one, Italian, she spoke just as fluently as English. Clever person, that was from dad of course. Some pretty clever nephews and nieces as well all thanks to grandpa (laughs).

**So during the Depression when you were working on your family's property, what were your older siblings doing? Had they done other things?**

Sue had trained, she'd done her nursing, I think she was up in Kalgoorlie and Maudie was in Bunbury, she'd won the scholarship she was training and then she did a, what do they call it the beginning of training for teaching, it's on the tip of my tongue. They're temporary.

**Oh doing their practical..**

Yes and I think May, the next one, was an excellent cook, she wasn't very academic but she was an excellent cook. She was probably working on someone else's place. Then Dot was doing a business course, she came top in typing and second I think in shorthand, clever things. She could play the piano too, I didn't do any of those things, I was behind the door when that happened, I followed mum more in that direction than dad. What happened after that, that was me Kath and Frank were both studying and Con and I were working on the orchard and dad was up hoping to make his fortune.

**So how long did he stay on the goldfields?**

I don't remember, quite some time, he didn't make his fortune, poor darling. He always knew where it was but he just never found it (laughs).

**So after, what did you do after working on your family's property?**

I stayed there, I did dressmaking as well. I went down to Tech in Perth when I was about fifteen (15) I suppose for a year, I did quite a bit of dressmaking, I loved sewing, always did. Did a lot of that and I don't remember, I must have augmented my funds a bit that way but I don't remember, but I did that. Mum had a treadle machine and at the age of six (6) I used this thing I was there in the machine (indicates)(laughs) it just about swallowed me. I was about nineteen (19) when I started my training. That was for a year course.

**That was nursing training?**

Yes at Royal Perth, the bus fare home was 4 and 6 and I got ten (10) shillings a week (laughs) we got our keep as well. We had oodles of milk, we were always hungry we worked like mad of course. And after you came off evening shift there would always be milk and stuff out for us. I don't know how much weight I gained,

but people used to laugh and say I looked like a ship in full sail coming down the ward.

**Oh no.**

Oh I know I gained a lot but I loved it, but I remember two (2) boys each with fractured femurs and in those days they had them up in splints. Another of my colleagues, one of those who was killed by the Japs, shot by Japs, you've heard of that story?

(30:03)

Dear little Alma, she used to clomp down the ward, and these boys would say "hey nurse Johnson would you teach Sister Beard at least, nurse Beard how to walk properly?" because she'd come clomp, clomp, clomp down the ward and shake the beds and with their leg up in plaster it wasn't very comfortable. We didn't have any money, but we had a lot of fun.

**Did you board in Perth during the week?**

Board?

**During your training.**

That was the accommodation, part of it, slept out on the verandah and shared a dressing room with someone else. We had lots of fun, marvellous friendships that lasted for all these years. My goddaughter is the daughter of one of the girls with whom I trained, she comes up, she looks after me very well (laughs).

**After your training, where did you work?**

I joined the Army, I did bits of nursing in between; I was down at Busselton for a while and Margaret River for a stage and round about. I'd enlisted, you waited until you were called up and then I was into the Army. I went to Palestine to start off with, oh golly, golly gosh, they were my wonderful boys. One boy was in Palestine that I nursed him, he always maintained that I saved his life. He's eighty seven (87) now and I still get cards from him, my dear Len, he was quite sure it was me. He had a very bad shoulder and we had to roll him over so the surgeon could see the wound and the surgeon said "are you alright Len?" and he said "yes thanks sir, but I think I might be a bit heavy for Sister". And Sister could have held him with one finger I think, he was so thin.

**It would have been a bit different coming from Lesmurdie going overseas, seeing all the different things.**

I grew up very fast, believe me. It was terrible, you've no idea what it's like, a crowd of boys coming in; we'd been notified that a troop train would be coming in, a train with patients on board, I can't think of my right terms, but they'd be coming in and the patients would be brought in and we had a routine. The doctor, the senior Sister would go around with the doctor and they'd leave a note on the patient of what had to be done and so on like that. Another one would be around to take particulars and this and that, and then someone would come round with the dressing trolley and do the wounds and so on. I was with a Victorian unit mainly, there were only seven (7) West Australians on it and there were about forty (40) Sisters but it was a wonderful team, we did very well the lot of us. We were in the Middle East for two (2) and a half years. Oh get me onto my war, that's a long time ago (laughs) it was the most wonderful time of my life.

**Oh ok. So From the Middle East, you went somewhere else during the War?**

From the Middle East oh yes we went to, I was in the Middle East, in Palestine. Where did we go from there? Oh wherever the War went, we went. At the end, El Alamien, remember that was the first defeat that Rommel had and those wonderful boys coming in, they were wonderful boys too. They might have something wrong with one arm, but one arm would be good and their legs would be alright and they'd carry a bowl of water, anything for us, they were wonderful.

(35:02)

But anyway from there I was in, I forget where we went from in there, then we went to New Guinea. Churchill would have been quite happy to keep the Australians over there to save England, he didn't want them to come back by golly; but anyway they came back and that's when they turned the ground at Kokoda, oh gosh those poor kids (laughs). It's still very clear, but that's when I grew up, that's when I sort of, if it hadn't been for the War goodness knows what my life would have been.

**And I guess you would have been a similar age to some of the soldiers fighting as well?**

Some of the soldiers, this one that I still get the card from was only seventeen (17), how old did they have to be, eighteen (18), he put his age up so he could go away. They were just kids absolutely. Oh gosh I've got a cupboard full of War books.

**Oh ok. So after the War, did you return to Lesmurdie?**

What did I do after the War? I kept in the Army for a while, you know the Army kept going, I took a patient to England, I'd nursed Mr and Mrs Dempster who owned what is now, this village down the road here (indicates further down Williams Road) it was a private residence and now it's all units. Know where I mean?

**I do, I can't remember the name either.**

Oh good girl thank you, but I nursed both Mr and Mrs Dempster and their son Bill there and then they recommended me to take Mr Pledge back to England. I met my husband, no it wasn't on that ship, later I was in England for quite a while, oh golly. I did a cycling, an eleven (11) week cycling tour with my sister Kath and a friend, a great big stand up and beg bike. Oh huge thing, I'd only cycled two (2) consecutive miles ever in my life, that was fun, eleven (11) weeks I remember one stage my hair had grown so much Kath tried to trim it with the scissors she used for mending tyres (laughs). Oh we had fun, that was wonderful for eleven (11) weeks. I did bits of dressmaking for people in between and then when I came back from there, I forget what I did actually straight off from there but I where did I go? Sometime later Marjory Dempster, the daughter of these two had married in Scotland and she was bringing her daughter home from Scotland and the Dempster's paid my fare back if I helped Marjory with herself reliant eight (8) year old daughter, you know. That was fun and we were sitting at the table of the second Engineer and that second Engineer turned out to be my husband several years later (laughs). That was some time later, I didn't marry until I was well in my thirties (30s). I fitted a good bit in one way or another.

**Excellent and what was your husband's name?**

Herbert Taylor, he was an Englishman. It wasn't a highly successful marriage, we were both, we lived separate lives, our own lives and it was part of the hazard of being on the boat so much, he drank far more than was very nice but anyway that

was that. I had my two (2) kids, there they are (indicates to photos) my son with my daughter, with her head on his shoulder. Ha ha me with my gallery there, my poor cleaner when she comes in all the photos to be (laughs).

**(40:17)**

**Ok so we'll talk a little bit more about your memories of Kalamunda and Lesmurdie, all right.**

Yes I should.

**It's good to get the background of your family.**

That's the background. Your one hour, have you got any other appointments? (laughs)

**No that's fine.**

Glen Avon I've told you that, that was opposite our place and it was a weekend sort of place, more or less a health resort. They used to go down to the falls [Lesmurdie Falls], crowds of people were round about there and later on the Sanderson's, I don't know how they became involved with Glen Avon, whether they owned part of it or what I don't know but Mrs Sanderson organised a girls knitting club; I was about thirteen (13), fourteen (14) something like that Agnes Sanderson was teaching me to knit. And I know I always ended up with far more stiches but anyway that was alright (laughs). It was a wooden building, not a scrap that it looks like now, and it had quite steep steps coming up to the verandah and there were three (3) Pittosporum trees, do you know Pittosporum trees?

**No.**

It's got a most beautiful perfume, we could smell it right across into our place on a still night and the gardens around about there, later on five (5) nuns from China came out there. Mother Meadatrix, I've forgotten what had gone on in China but they had to get away from there and I don't know how they were involved with this religious order that they've got there. It was a terribly hot summer and we had air conditioning in our place then, I'd come back from England I'd lived in England for about six (6) years and I'd come back and we bought the air conditioning for this room. And I remember doctor, the doctor up here anyway asking mum if one of the nuns could come over, she was ill and it was so terribly hot and she came over there. There were five (5) of them, I've forgotten where they went. I forget when Villa Maria, they had part of it, they had units so they must have bought part of it and gradually had the units there and they were extending it down Lesmurdie Road, do you remember the bit that goes down that way? And they've cut down a lot of trees from there and I remember my darling mum crying because they were cutting the trees down. They'd been there for so many years with her but anyway that was that. I told you about the development of where the guest houses were with Coles, horrible I can't believe that. Its altered so much, I haven't been driven through Kalamunda for quite a while but from up at the top of Haynes Street there was a grocery shop owned by Hummerston and Watson. And beyond that, had been the, what was the name of the people who had the store, they kept grain and whatnot there a bit further down, but anyway. There was a hospital below where this shop at the top, no houses or shops down Haynes Street, this little hospital there. You probably don't remember that, lots of people don't remember it. In Jack Wallis' memoirs, in the little booklets, he mentioned that Sister whatever her name was, had let him stay there for some time.



(45:14)

So there are a few people who still remember that there was a hospital there. I can't remember when it disappeared. And you know the garage was originally was in Haynes Street did you?

**I think I'd heard something about that.**

Then they decided to make the village more whatever and the garage was moved back over to what's the street it's in now?

**Barber?**

Mead Street. It was in Mead Street there, it's changed altogether, all the little shops down there. The chemist shop in Haynes Street, there used to be a veggie shop right down there road there, oh lots of things and Secrett's had their tennis courts. Have you heard of the tennis courts?

**I have heard about that, so whereabouts was that on Haynes Street?**

Down the bottom, just before you got to the corner of Canning Road I've forgotten the name of the people who had a little shop on the corner but the tennis courts there. And there used to be a school, this is going back, my eldest sisters went to it, School Street there used to be a school there. A Mr Walsh and Mr Cadwallader were teachers. There's another Mr Walsh who taught in the 1960 he taught my son but he's no relation to that one.

**And is that the same school that's in History Village now, that was on School Street?**

No the one before that.

**Oh ok.**

I went to school at that little one, I can't believe the silly little desks that are there, there are photos of me in the albums there, a little girl at school (laughs). Oh dear how we all grow up.

**Any other memories about Kalamunda?**

Oh about the buses, did you know about the buses? Did you know Welshpool Road had been changed; it used to, where it turns down now it goes down, I've forgotten what they've called the road, and they've extended it round to the round bit, they've taken away a sharp corner. There used to be granite outcrop there and in great big white letters *Christ died for our sake* was on it but that's gone and they used to have like motorbike races up the hill about once a month. I think two (2) people were killed there in the time that they did it; but with the buses going down there, they were funny old buses not like they are now. They had to have skid chains on them to go down the hill and skid chains coming up, and sometimes the passengers would be asked to walk up the hill,

**Oh no.**

Because the bus just couldn't take it you know (laughs). I didn't realise I had so many bits tucked away then until I started thinking about this. They were totally different buses from what they are today.

**I've seen some old photos of some of the buses.**

Have you come across anyone as old as me up here, local people?

**Not yet, but I'm sure there's some people.**

I doubt it, I think I'm probably the last of this lot. I'm the last of the gang that I got around with. I had an aneurism when I was eighty nine (89) and I told my doctor I didn't want to be resuscitated but apparently this one was a bit different from the usual and the wretched South African surgeon was in charge and they gave me two (2) and a half litres of blood, an eighty nine (89) year old.

(50:12)

To me it would always be misuse of blood, that's why I'm as hale and hearty as I am. But all my family have gone and all my Army friends have gone and I haven't seen my doctor for months (laughs). I mightn't be very polite to him. It's silly, you know, something'll happen and I'll think 'oh what was that knock' and I've got no one to compare it with or anything. I'm very lucky because I haven't got any aches or pains and I think I've still got my marbles.

**I'm sure, you've been telling me a good lot of stuff today. I'm just looking through my list of questions. Did you get to entertainment in Kalamunda or did they have other entertainment other than singing around the piano?**

There wasn't much entertainment, there used to be picture shows in the town hall, what did they call our hall?

**The Agricultural hall.**

Agricultural hall (in unison), yes. My dear friend Bette Hawley who's in unit four (4) was born up here but she was about three (3) when she left but when her mother was heavily pregnant with her, she had to climb the stairs because they ran the picture shows. And apparently it was from the back of the hall and she had to get up, climb up the staircase to manipulate this thing (laughs) which wasn't very easy.

**So how often were they held, the picture shows?**

I think they were about, I forget if they were monthly or weekly, but I remember seeing oh what was the chappie's name, I was just going to say it and it disappeared. Not Bob Hope but anyway a few of them. We'd walk from home, never any taxis or anything like that or horse and cart or anything, we'd walk often.

**Did you go to the Kalamunda Show?**

The Kalamunda Show gosh yes that was a dress up, gloves and hat, oh golly yes you'd have on your best for that. I won at about the age of ten (10) I won the best dressed doll and at an older date I got second for my bread, I forget what else. Oh the Show was a lovely thing in those days, people used to preserve their fruit and all sorts of things, lovely clothes and cooking; oh the cooking was beautiful.

**And I've heard there was a ball after the show.**

Oh always yes, the Show itself would finish at six (6pm) and people would take their exhibits and the whole lot and then there'd be someone there, a gang, to get the room ready for dancing, and get it all fixed up. Boys used to love getting round on bags to make the floor all shiny and slippery and so on but I was too shy, I was a terribly shy kid and I didn't dance. I didn't dance until my husband taught me to dance on the ship coming home (laughs) and then I loved it, he was an excellent dancer. He was very overweight but he was as light as a feather on his feet, wonderful dancer.

**Did your whole family go to the Show, you all went together and spent the day there?**

If we were there, we were not home all together very much, you know with the different way of life.

**So did it go from, because now it goes from Friday night to until Saturday.**

I've forgotten how long it went on, there was the main day, I think there might only have been one day I can't remember. But I know at eleven (11) o'clock in the morning you'd be all dressed up in a best hat and gloves and the whole lot (laughs). You'd have a special frock for it, it was really an occasion, oh fun.

(55:09)

**Sounds like fun.**

A long time ago, oh you've certainly raked up some bits that I'd forgotten all about. What else have I got written down here? The grocer used to ring up for the phone order once a week and deliver the groceries to the door, had you heard that?

**Yes, so was that a grocer in Kalamunda or was there one in Lesmurdie?**

A grocer in Kalamunda and the butcher would come out once a week with his cart, I don't know what he had for refrigeration I've forgotten that but Mr Ellis, I can see his cart opposite at Villa Maria. Mum would go and get whatever she wanted from there, I mean imagine it now. Mr Ellis' shop was on Central Road, I think there's an estate agent's place there but there was a great big thing that went up into the sky, a refrigeration thing from there. And he'd go on the different rounds you know different parts, it was very friendly.

**A very good service.**

Yes oh it was very nice, nowadays oh but my friend here Bette's husband, he's practically blind; he uses a white stick and he'd done some shopping the other day and he was going along with his white stick in evidence and his bag of groceries and a car stopped beside him and said 'get off the road you silly old bugger'. Can you imagine it, can you imagine it? Those days, I don't know what's happening to the world but Pete's such a nice person, he's ex-serviceman as well and to be spoken to like that, trying to do his best.

**Yes it's not very nice at all.**

I told you about the outcrop. Bins and Webster were the original bus owners and Kossie [Kostera] bought it from them. Kossie came over from South Australia to Bins, and oh they were funny squashed little buses with the seats going right

through, that was funny. I told you about the school teachers, the butcher's cart, that's all I've got written down.

**Oh ok, I've got a couple more questions. You mentioned the Sanderson's, so do you remember any other local identities, local prominent people in the area?**

Oh there were lots of people. The Sanderson's we sort of looked up to because they had money and we didn't (laughs), they had their house and so on but things went very wrong for them after a while. Everyone knew everyone, people by the name of McClure had a house in Glen Road, the Catholics have taken that now, they own everything roundabout there. But the McClure's were there, what was his name? Mr Patterson's daughter married one of the McClure's and she died in childbirth and later he married again, I wish I could remember his name, but anyway she died and Mrs, the second Mrs McClure, used to teach Sunday School. And I used to come down from home, just down there to the convent, not the convent but the little offshoot road there and they had a dog and from about Falls Road corner I'd be saying 'nice Ludo, nice Ludo' (laughs) right til I got down there because I was terrified of dogs (laughs). Oh golly.

(1:00:12)

The Smith's lived down there, I think they've all gone. The little Lesmurdie school, there, then at least Falls Road school wasn't there. There wasn't nearly as many people, it was much, much better (laughs) too many people, too many people in the world all together.

**So where there community groups? Were you involved in community groups?**

I wasn't really because I was so darn shy, oh there were lots of things Girl Guides and you know all the usual sort of things but I was too shy, crazy. No it was the War that got me out of my shyness (laughs).

**Do you participate in the ANZAC Day service?**

I marched for years yes, the Army meant everything to me.

**So you'd go down to the City, to the service in the City?**

Yes, do you know, oh I was going to say the name and it went, anyway one (1), two (2) of them rang me up and said they miss me on the marches but most of my cobbles have gone from the marching. Our returned Sisters sub-branch has had to fold up because we'd all folded up (laughs), there were very few of us left not enough to carry on which is a bit sad.

**Yes it is a bit sad. Do you go to the service in Kalamunda, the ANZAC Day service?**

No I don't get out much at all anymore, I used to. I took the salute there for local RSL one year and a little boy asked the others 'why are we saluting a nun?' because I had my veil on, they don't wear veils now.

**No they don't.**

Oh nursing's just ruined, they've absolutely wrecked nursing it's not what it was at all, and they look so untidy in their black slacks and oh no.

**You like the old uniforms.**

It's not what it used to be at all which is very sad and it's all because of a bit of paper. The physiotherapists and so on have their university degrees and the nurses didn't, they had their hospital degrees. They'd look after the patient as a patient, not as a blooming bit of paper. And some of the girls made such a fuss and dance about it that they should have their university thing but they lost everything the silly fools. Our mad girls from here have all died (laughs) they haven't seen what damage they did. Crazy you can't look after a patient, I shouldn't be on my own now as I am. Helen comes in, I'm lucky that I've got a wonderful carer, she's an absolute gem of a girl. She's private, I don't have anything to do with the others she's a gem but some of them, one dear friend is ninety three (93) or ninety four (94) and she has to go from the Central Road down to the doctor down at the foot of the hill, Canning Road, do you know where I mean?

**Yes.**

Just near Kalamunda Road there. Helen does all my shopping, she looks in my cupboard, 'you haven't got so and so, and so and so; do you think you'll want so and so? Have you got enough of that do you think?' She's wonderful, she practically breathes for me and I've only got to pick up the phone if I want her. So I'm very lucky, very, very lucky.

**Ok well this is my last question for you. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and Lesmurdie and the surrounding areas?**

(1:05:02)

It has been pretty special, I don't have much to do with anything anymore. What can I say about that, I'm glad I've lived up here although when I came back from England I wanted to live in Perth so that I'd be near my Army colleagues, but my sister wanted to live up here and I was always under my sister's thumb. I mean we got on, we were both nurses. I looked after her right till the end but it is a bit special, or it was. It's a pity we need rain because the weather could go on like this, I spend some time out there in the sun but it could go on like that forever really. I have my meals there in the kitchen, I gave my lovely dining suite to my nephew because it was rather a lovely suite that I bought in London and I gave it to Nick when he married. But I sit there at the bench and I look out and I can see the weeds growing, like Mackellar's poem "the filmy veil of greenness that thickens as you gaze" and I can see it each morning, it's getting thicker and thicker since we had that heavy shower a couple of days ago.

**Yes that was lovely.**

Yes, I hope we have some more but the wretched birds are cutting off all my new growth on the roses, I get mad about that. Do they do that with yours?

**Hmm.**

Nothing much you can do about it.

**No I don't think so.**

(laughs) What have I got, [shows a photo] that is the house that I lived in, in Nangkita Road, that's called Nangkita. It doesn't look like that now, they've painted it

black or grey and they've pulled out a lot of the garden but Helen told me today that the owner now is working hard in the garden so it must have changed hands.

**So that's where you moved to with your sister?**

My sister lived opposite, I moved from there to here. I've been here for eighteen (18) years (laughs).

**It's a nice spot.**

It is, it's very nice. All the kids round there [gestures to photos on display], that gorgeous creature in the red went down to one (1) pound, thirteen (13) ounces she fitted in my son's hands like that. She's now in her second or third year of law, absolutely brilliant. I say to her mother if she'd gone full term I wonder what she'd have been like (laughs). Oh they're all pretty good, they're all doing very well.

**Excellent, well I'll stop the tape now if you haven't got anything else to talk about?**

No, goodness knows what you've got.

Interview ends: 1 hour 8 minutes 33 seconds.

**It's the 31 July 2011 and my name is Alethea du Boulay, I'm with Mrs Taylor for the second part of her oral history interview talking about Kalamunda.**

Did you have any queries about Glen Avon?

**Yes do you want to talk.**

People querying that it was Glen Avon?

**No just my own queries, a little bit more information about it.**

Yes I've got the names of various people, would you like those?

**Yes please, we'll start off about Glen Avon then.**

Mr and Mrs Agar and they had two (2) daughters, Nan and Ron, I think it was Veronica; and May and Queenie Dawe accompanied these girls came out, they were managing it. They both married Australian boys and an English couple, I can't remember their name but we used to supply the people with cream and eggs and so on. And they wanted a jill of cream and we hadn't a clue what a jill was so we just sent over whatever the thing was (laughs) and I think I mentioned Mother Meadatrix.

**Yes.**

So they were there from 1963 for quite some time. They'd been in China and I don't know why they had to get out, they were being, what's the word I'm thinking of?

**Persecuted?**

Yes and I've mentioned Dempsters, Brody Hall and a lot of that. Was there any more you wanted to know about Brody, I mean Milton Park?

**Just about Glen Avon, just wondering when it was built and who built it?**

Well I think I mentioned that in the beginning, whether Wheelwright and Brady had something to do with the building of it, but it was there; I think I mentioned it was the nurses' quarters when the Repat was part what is now St Brigids.

**So it would have been built before World War One?**

Or during World War One, yes. It was there all my life, I came in 1915 and it was always there. Lesmurdie was always a health resort, you know Kalamunda was, they'd come up for long weekends and public holidays and things like that. They'd come up on the train and sometimes walk out to Glen Avon because there weren't any taxis then and if they were coming to board somewhere the people would provide the transport. It became or at least it was a health resort, at one stage the Sanderson's owned it; I don't know where they fitted in but Mrs Sanderson organised a girl's club in the lovely big sitting room. Agnes Sanderson taught me to knit and I always had lots more stiches on than I started (laughs) off with. Did I mention the lovely Pittosporum trees?

**Yes you did.**

They were lovely down there.

**So with the Sanderson's, did they move into the area?**

The new Sanderson's house, down beyond, it's now part of St Brigid's. There was the road, I can't remember the road now, coming down from by the church, straight up to their place. Oh Sandy's, you know, we sort of looked up to the Sandy's (laughs). They had lots more money than the rest of us and a nice home there. I don't know how St Brigid's has taken over, how the Catholic church has taken over, but it's all part of it now.

**Had they moved to Lesmurdie for health reasons?**

He came out from England and Mrs Sanderson was an Australian, Bishop somebody or other's daughter, they had several children; not a very happy arrangement really.

(5:15)

Three (3) of the girls were not quite mentally stable which was very sad, but anyway that was that, we used to look up to Sandy's because we didn't have two (2) pennies to rub together. They had that place, and where did we go from there?

**Just another question about the Sanderson's, sorry; so even though they had lots more money than your family did, did everyone still all socialise together?**

More or less, but they were the hob nobs of the district, you know, but then it was very sad because they had a lot of ill health and one thing and another which was very sad indeed. Once upon a time, their old house was converted into a hospital; this was not so many years ago, I suppose it was a good while, but I'd finished my training then, I was a nurse and I worked there for a little while I think. Doctor, what was his name, the doctor who was up here for a long time, I remember him being down there. And then by degrees the Catholics took over more and more. They had a lovely swimming pool but the development along there now is quite incredible. I can't remember much more that would be of interest for you there, but getting back up to Lesmurdie Road, on the corner of Hope Crescent; do you know where that is?

**Yes.**

That was known as the Blackberry Corner. There was an orchard, Everston's orchard, opposite which is now somebody's Percy Seeton's park, Seeton Park. That was all completely taken over by blackberries. I don't know who planted them or what but they wrecked the orchard, but oh gosh mum's apple and blackberry pies were gorgeous (laughs). People were there, I don't know quite how they got rid of them but after a long time they did, after they wrecked all that. That was known as the Blackberry Corner for many, many years; the road sloped, it was a very dangerous corner. I remember poor old Mr Hearst, the parson the Anglican parson, used to drive a funny old car; an old tin can we used to call it, but he came round that corner too fast one Sunday and the car capsized. There was a drain there and he fell into the drain; no damage done and the dear old chap was always smiling and he crawled out of it still smiling (laughs). We all remember that, aren't I terrible but that was that. I don't remember when they altered the road but from Ronneby dad was furious when they built the road up, they did build it up you see and that meant that we were on a slope to go down to it, which was very difficult. Incidentally I told the girl who owns it, Penelope, that you'd like to see Ronneby, she was going to ring you, she's a very busy girl but she'd love to show it to you, she's very proud of Ronneby, loves every stick and stone on it. She's a wonderful girl, she spends a lot of her time giving her time for various things in Europe conferences and things. She does a lot of voluntary work all over the world really, quite free.



(10:14)

**It is interesting because the road is quite a big drop down to those houses.**

On our side, oh Dad was absolutely furious.

**Can you remember why they decided to do that?**

It's a horrible drive because we had the gateway on the road, you know, you just came in but now you go right down. It's quite dangerous actually.

**So do you remember why they decided to do that?**

It was just building the road that was all, it wasn't just flat along the normal surface. Nothing's left the same though they always have to interfere (laughs) and alter something.

**Just trying to think who else lived along Lesmurdie Road, were there many other people living along Lesmurdie Road at the time?**

There were not many, but houses sprang up like mushrooms. Lesmurdie Road, you know Sampson Road, that was named after a Member of Parliament by the way. He lived in that first house on the corner of Sampson Road and Lesmurdie Road, I've got a prize in there from school donated by Mr Sampson, but anyway that whole block belonged to people by the name of Nicholson. They were solicitors and Nick wouldn't let you take a leaf off his property and then it was all subdivided up when he retired but there used to be a path from just before the house in Nangkita Road, my house it used to be, there was some sliprails and a path went from there and came out at Hope Crescent. So that was a lovely walk through there; broke our hearts when they chopped it up and the houses there. I've got lots of pictures in my mind's eye I can't share.

**So what about the other side of Lesmurdie Road?**

That orchard was there for quite a long time and then by degrees that was subdivided too. I don't know why they made it Percy Seeton Park, Percy was a young fellow who did all sorts of helpful work around the place, at one stage he did the baker's delivery. I'm not quite sure why he became famous, but he did. Quite noted there, lots of people there; oh golly I can see the big orchards there and then they gradually grew. Glyde Road, do you know Glyde Road? that was just a lovely bush track once, we walked all this bush. We used to walk for miles, miles and miles from Ronneby we'd walk over to Walliston, to the corner of Glyde Road and Canning Road; oh we wouldn't think of, it was just a walk. There wasn't any transport, the buses didn't start running until 1924. Funny old buses too, has anyone told you anything about the buses?

**A little bit, I think you mentioned it last time I came.**

Did I? That they had to have skid chains on them. Oh golly, it was sometimes get out and walk (laughs). It wouldn't come up the hill, modern people couldn't believe it really I'm sure. We used to go down in the horse and cart, I can remember my mother letting the horse more or less have its head and it'd go quite mad (laughs) going down that hill. Mum was fearless, but that's that.

(15:22)

Kostera's garage, have they told you anything about that? When he came up Binn's and what was the other fellow's name? Binn's and someone's came up first and

then Kostera's came over from South Australia and started the bus service. That was in about 1924 we had funny old buses, but they were buses and it was transport from the door which was very good. [checking over notes] Skid change, walking up the hill, I mentioned the granite outcrop; I'm not sure, Binn's and Webster went from there. I don't think I mentioned to you that in about 1926 or 1927 or so, it might have been a bit later; the grocer used to ring up for Mum's order. Prior to that I'm not sure how she got her groceries, but they'd ring up one day a week for her order and then they'd deliver the order too in a horse and cart mostly. The delivery boy would carry the bag of chaff off the thing, out to our shed and put it where Dad wanted it. Imagine it today, imagine it today but they would do all sorts of things like that. Did you know that the Queen and the Prince, getting back to Sanderson's, the Queen and the Duke, her husband, stayed at Sanderson's?

**No I didn't know that.**

They came out in about 1927 I think, they had to leave the two (2) little girls in England, but in their car they came along Lesmurdie Road. We Johnson's were hanging on the fence and the Queen waved to us (laughs), for a weekend and they went to church in St Swithun's church. So you know we really had (laughs) something here. That was '27 I think, around about there anyway. I'm not sure how Sandy's got it but that's when they were top knot.

**They must have been pretty important.**

Yes. I'm not sure how long the Queen and the Duke were over here, a while (laughs).

**Very nice.**

Yes I'm glad I can bring royalty into it. I don't know whether we'll ever see Phillip and Kate; Kate and Prince Phillip is it?

**William.**

William, isn't it awful; get mixed up. That was lovely and I hope it will all work out, I think it will. It seems natural and lovely, I hope Diana is watching on.

Where the Mead Street surgery is, did you know that that was where they shoe horses, what do you call it?

**A blacksmith.**

A blacksmith's yes. Had you heard that?

**No I haven't heard that before.**

That's what it was in my childhood and one family, Champion's, they lived on the corner of Lesmurdie Road and Welshpool Road; a good way away from Kalamunda. Mr Champion used to put May who was two (2) years older than me, she'd be about ten (10) I suppose; put her on the horse's back and send her off into Kalamunda. The horse knew the way and she'd go in there, the horse would be shod and the blacksmith would put her onto the horse again and she'd come back home. You know just like that (laughs) imagine it these days. And you knew the train went right through to Walliston, did you?

(20:14)

**Yes I think someone's mentioned about that.**

Yes it went right through to Walliston, the railway line went right through where the church is now and right along through the bush there, but there was a water tower there too, just by them, about where the church is. You know where I'm talking about, opposite the hotel? [Along Railway Road].

**Yes.**

It's a bit hard to imagine it now and just near the crossing there was a little sort of shack sort of thing and the Misses Sinnet had an estate agency, the two (2) sisters there.

**I haven't heard of that.**

You didn't know that?

**No. So that was in Kalamunda?**

That was in Kalamunda, yes. Opposite the hotel, there was only the little old hotel, you know there's the little one next to the big one. Gosh there used to be a chappie there, I've forgotten his name now, but he was always drunk and I was always terrified of him; a big fat fellow. I can't remember his name now. The hotel's always been there.

**There'd be a lot of stories about the hotel.**

There have been. I haven't had many, I mean we didn't have anything to do with it, Dad didn't drink, thank goodness, we didn't have any socialising there.

**So did you want to talk about Milton Park?**

Milton Park? You want to hear more about that?

**Yes please.**

The Dempsters were a well-known family, an old family from here and they had two (2) children Marjorie, who later became my matron of honour, and William. William died of cancer which was very sad. They also had a station up north, they called Milton Park Caridar. What was Caridar, where have I got that? [looking up notes] They had a special name for it. (pause) I've written it down somewhere. I don't remember quite when or who it was responsible, I think both Mr and Mrs Dempster became ill and they sold the place or turned it into a, I don't know whether they turned it into Milton Park or not; I don't think so. I think they might have sold it, it was a two (2) and a half acre place with a lovely view right through down to Perth. It was lovely and I don't know how many, I think there were thirty (30) odd units there whoever took over certainly made a bit of money out of it.

**Yes I would think so.**

Yes. They're very nice units, what is now there, you know they have a centre for entertainment and what not, that was the big living room, big entertainment. Oh they had a lovely home, lovely possessions, pictures and so on; it was a beautiful home.

**So they've kept the old house around the units?**

They've put the units around the house, yes and scattered through the yard, the two (2) and a half acres.

(25:00)

They've altered the kitchen part, I mean the entertainment part, you wouldn't know it was the gorgeous room that it was. They had lovely gardens roundabout. My Dad built an underground tank for them and every bit of stonework roundabout there. You haven't been able to look at the church, of course, now that it's Kostera's private property; a private home.

**I've been in there once before.**

You have?

**When it was a church, a lovely building.**

Yes it's lovely, I used to walk in with Dad when I was about ten (10) or eleven (11) to the service on Sunday night; walk from Ronneby in there and back again. I adored my darling old Dad, he had quite a good singing voice. I told you he jumped ship didn't I, without a word of English on him, but he learned English very, very quickly. And whenever I hear the hymn *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*, he always said 'der' instead of 'the', but that was the only one. Whenever I hear it, I'm standing beside him in the church, darling old pet. The church took over, they built the place in Heath Road because that one wasn't big enough. There's absolutely no comparison, of course (laughs).

**No (laughs), it's a nice building.**

Anything else I can tell you about that, that you want to know about that?

**I'm not sure.**

I can't remember either, they don't sort of mention him very much I don't think and he built that. He left school at the age of eleven (11) because things were so grim in Sweden at that stage, but he learned English very quickly. Did I tell you he stayed with the family of an ex-teacher, did I tell you that?

**You did.**

And the little girl of six (6) helped him with his English, but he looked at what experts did; how they did things and he was a very quick learner which was marvellous. Darling old pet, he never got back to Sweden, we never had enough money to send him back. Two (2) of his brothers came out and saw the place.

**Did he talk much about Sweden?**

Oh he used to talk about Sweden, yes. He had Swedish books and so on. When he jumped ship I don't know how he carried his belongings because he had papers and things; he just carried them. I gave Penny a copy of their wedding photo recently and she was thrilled to bits, she'll keep it in the main entrance. She was thrilled to bits, she's very proud of the place, tells people that [its] built [from] the stone which Mum and Dad quarried from roundabout here.

**That's amazing.**

It is amazing. You want to go down, have a look some time, either you contact her or she'll contact you. She's had some stone walls built, you've probably seen them of course, she's done that. The place is nothing like it was when we were there as far as the gardens around the house, everything's grown (laughs). Its fifty (50) years, trees don't just stop still.

**They don't no. Is there anything else in your notes you wanted to talk about?**

What did I have down there, the bus drivers, you didn't want those.

**Oh, yes.**

Caridar is what they called it, C A R I D A R, Caridar. I think that's Scottish, I'm not sure.

(30:06)

**The Dempster's were Scottish, had a Scottish background?**

It must have been way back I think because they were very Australian. I forget whether there's somewhere down the South West named after them, I know they scattered around and I told you they had a property, a station, up north.

[Going through notes]

The bus drivers, the Mead Street surgery (pause) I've told you about the blackberry corner. Weep's had cream and butter and eggs and all that lot to the guest houses, so I'm not just imagining the guest houses, there were lots of them.

I think perhaps that's that, if I think of anything else I'll let you know (laughs). I'm getting very forgetful which is maddening. Ninety six (96) coming up, oh crikey (laughs). Oh it's terrible, time's gone so quickly that's the point but I'm so lucky that I've still got my marbles. So many much younger have lost theirs and I'm so lucky in having a wonderful girl to look after me. It's a private arrangement, it's nothing to do with War Vets, but I've got others who have that horrible bone disease but she's got to look after herself and get herself to the doctors and so on. It's all so absolutely wrong, the whole thing. And nursing they've absolutely wrecked, it's different from what it was; we used to look after the oldies. There they are, I haven't seen my doctor for ages because I've lost all faith in the medical profession (laughs).

I don't really think I can help you any more there.

**You've been excellent.**

I've been very forgetful today.

**No it's been very, very good. Thank you.**

Interview ends: 32 minutes 42 seconds.

**Oral History interview**

**Audrey Warburton**

**Interview date: 16 March 2013**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**

**It's the 16th March 2013, my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Mrs Warburton for my Curtin University thesis project the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**Could you just start with your name and birthdate please?**

Yes, well my name is Audrey Florence Warburton and my birthday is the 7 April [1933], next month, and I will be eighty (80).

**Thank you. Can you tell me a little bit about your family, your parents and any siblings please?**

Well I don't have any siblings. My father was born in England and came out when he was aged two (2) and he's now one hundred and two (102). My mother is a descendant off the first ship that arrived in Fremantle, not an important one; but one, the actual people were bonded servants. [Mum and Dad married in 1932, both aged twenty one (21).]

**So where did they live when they got married?**

In Fremantle, East Fremantle. Mum and dad before they were married, both lived in South Fremantle because that's where most people lived in those days. Her grandfather was a boat builder in Fremantle. The place he used to [work in], you might know it Alethea, you know Fremantle where the old fish markets are **(yes)** there's a very old stone [building], I think it's now an arty crafty place, it was his boatshed. That's where he built boats back in 1902 or 1903 or something. So the history of mum's [family] is quite interesting.

**So you grew up in Fremantle or East Fremantle?**

East Fremantle, yes. And that's where I was until I met Bill and then after five (5) years we married and moved to a house in East Fremantle. And there we lived [for] nine (9) years and Bill wanted some land and we started looking around and to cut a long story short; we've been here [in Kalamunda] since January 1964.

**What were the other areas you looked at other than Kalamunda?**

Armada because there was land [available]. We did have friends who lived in Kalamunda and we'd come up to visit and said 'oh perhaps we'll look around here'. [So] here we are and as Bill said the other day 'he can't leave here, they'll take him out in a box' because where would he go, this is where he wants to be (laughs). Trouble is I think sometimes it's too hard to make the next move, but anyhow, so here we are and very happily ensconced.

**I guess I'll follow on with that and can you describe your own family please, your children.**

We have three (3) children: Greg, Julie, Trevor. Greg lives in Toodyay, Julie's teaching up north and Trevor lives in Busselton (laughs). They're all good kids, did all their schooling here and went on from here. They've all been overseas, for different periods of time, working or doing things but now they've sort of settled down. Greg's married, lives in Toodyay, no children. Julie was married and she [has] five (5) children, she's teaching and Trev's down in Busselton and he [has] one little boy.

**Great. So I'll talk about Kalamunda, ask you about Kalamunda now. You've decided to live in Kalamunda and where did you buy your property in Kalamunda?**

56 Recreation Road. We're now living on the bottom block of it. Did you say where or when?

**Were there other, were there many houses around?**

No there was nothing over there (indicates towards Recreation Road), nothing down there (indicates toward Traylen Road) and only that big house there [on the corner of Alpine and Traylen Roads] which was a convalescent home at the time when we first came here. See then your nanna came not long after in that little old house that was knocked down on the corner. But there was nothing, that was just one big long block the same as this was when we came with just the houses facing Recreation Road. Can't see that there's any more to say about that.

**What about the services was the water on at that time?**

Yes but we had a water tank, but the interesting part was now you've said, it had only come on the end of the year before. The actual water that came in was all tank water. There was a big high tank on a stand fed by gravity and there were two (2) water tanks at the back of the laundry.

(5:12)

So they would have had plenty of water but we went on using the big stand for watering, the gravity fed thing, so that was that. The other very good service was that you could ring Foodland, IGA now, and give them your order and they would bring it down, bring it in and put it on the kitchen table for you (laughs).

**Very convenient. Ok, so what about your earliest memories of the town centre, you've just mentioned some of the shops. Are there any places?**

Well that was then, Union Stores, there was a barbers, there was this veggie shop that came, there was this little electrical store on the corner of Mead Street. But I'm talking five (5) years has gone by, gradually these things came. I couldn't really say anything much about them because I had the three (3) kids and didn't have a car and used to push the pram with the baby in it and one sitting [on the front]. But that was fine, never found any of it a problem, like hey I want out of here, no, and if it was really desperate, well Midland was just down the road if it was something that you couldn't get here. But to my way of thinking for a hills village it was great, loved it. Still do, although it takes a while to cross the road these days.

**Yes it does sometimes (laughs). So what did you do in your spare time?**

Spare time?

**Yes spare time. No spare time?**

Well I used to work night duty at, [the small hospital in Lesmurdie]. You know at the back of St Brigid's [College, in Lesmurdie] there, that old house. Well that was a hospital and I worked there at night, two (2) nights a week. Get ready for this, twelve (12) hour shift, twelve (\$12) dollars [a night].

**Oh my goodness.**



By myself.

**Wow.**

One person, we had about twenty four (24) patients and I thought I was lucky, it was great. We were very involved with our church back in those days, not quite so much now because we don't have as many people at church anymore, it's going down. So I did that, I was always in the things to with it like Ladies' Fellowship and all that sort of stuff so that really would have been what I was; I didn't join any tennis clubs or things like that. I didn't have time, I had all this property, we were busy (laughs). It's almost full time work here and that was fine, that's what we came for to have the space to do these things. So that's that. That's the only work I did up here until the house stopped being a hospital, when they built Kalamunda Hospital and I went there. I worked there for ten (10) years. I wish they'd never changed it, if they'd kept it as it was it would have been a very good thing. I think that's been a down move because we've got bigger. When we didn't have the population we had all the equipment and the baby place and then not. And then when the population grows, oh we don't want that anymore. Anyway that's all beside the point.

**Well it's a good point to make. Did you travel to Perth very often? No?**

Still don't and if I do I drive the car down to Woodbridge, leave it there and hop on the train to Perth.

**So everything you needed was up here.**

Yes, for us we were perfectly happy with what was here. I mean I'm sure there were times when I went to Perth. Bill worked in Perth, he worked at the ABC. So he had a lot of travelling from here. He was there for twenty (20) years, so my husband was going to Perth every day.

**Ok. I'm just trying to see what the next question is.**

**(10:04)**

**Who were some of the local identities of the area, either then or now; can you think of any, any prominent people in the community?**

What's his name, Pat Hallahan (laughs). I gather everybody will tell you Pat Hallahan. Yes he was an extremely well known person around the place. I couldn't tell you (laughs), most people are different we had our little group and that's who we visited, or you know 'come round for a cup of tea or something'. We didn't really have anything much to do with the actual running of the place up there because it suited us and our church took up a lot of our time. We'd go to things to do with that, no I couldn't even tell you who the; oh yes Taylor her name was, I was going to say who one of the [Shire] Presidents were. I wouldn't have known, I remember her because she was there for quite a while. But no only Pat Hallahan (laughs), he was practically Mr Kalamunda at the time I think, he's so well known.

**So Pat Hallahan was well known because of; he was just involved in everything.**

He was in everything and he was outgoing and you know everyone knew him and if anything was happening and his name appeared on it, roll up, we'll go and see that (laughs). He was very well known. [Elizabeth] Taylor I remember her because it was the first time there'd been a lady President.

**Will do (laughs). Ok that's fine. Alright here's a good question how has Kalamunda and in particular the town centre changed since you first came to Kalamunda?**

A great deal.

**Yes, for the good or for bad? Or a bit of both?**

Well I think it's gone a bit beyond because it's just getting so busy and a lot of the people, us included, who came here for its' peace feel the same. Not that I'm going to move, it's alright down this end. It's just progress isn't it, people suddenly think 'oh gee Kalamunda's nice, let's go and live in Kalamunda'. Well if the people come you've got to supply more services, don't they. Bigger shops and escalators in Coles (laughs) and that type of thing but I wouldn't up stumps and go because of it, I mean it doesn't really affect us. I'm only ever up there once a week. I go to the library, now the library's very good, a very good library, yes. They're rustling up a book at the moment for my husband that was written in 1925 or something. They went through all the State Library and all this and there were six (6) books that this fellow had written, no, no, no, the sixth one – yes, she said 'I think I can get it for him'. So fill in the form, so yes a very good library. I do enjoy the library. That's it.

**Ok, well you've answered about the community groups, because you've mentioned about the church groups and the hospital. Was there anything else that you've been involved with, perhaps after you finished working? Or did they just continue on?**

Playing Rummikub every fortnight [with three (3) other very long time friends].

**Fair enough, that's a pretty good group to involved with.**

That's our special group, people are different and have that need. I don't, I'm perfectly happy and satisfied and fulfilled where I am and with what I'm doing so that's it. I don't go wondering what I can do, I'm happy. My five (5) grandkids keep me interested, they all do amazing interesting things and that's all interesting. So, no I never wanted to join any other clubs. (whispers) I like the Rummikub club (laughs).

**I think that's just about it. Well is there anything else perhaps that's not on the questions but perhaps that jogged your memory when you were reading the questions through about Kalamunda or about changes?**

Not about Kalamunda. Oh I tell you what, see Julie had a horse; when we lived up there, we had a horse down here, two (2) actually, someone else's.

(15:13)

Well I suppose in a way I could have said we were involved with the pony, horse riding. Not that we rode, but Julie did, so you see we had that interest because she rode. Trevor had a trail bike, that required getting it to wherever for him to go off; but we were never part of committees or anything of that sort. We would go to these things because of the kids. They were very happy here, they loved it to bits, they were always out in the bush. Well today, parents today wouldn't let their kids go off and sleep down at Rocky Pool or whatever, be too scared to. Our kids were doing it all the time, 'where are you going?' I'd say to Julie, she'd be going for a ride, 'which direction are you going?', it's all I ever wanted to know so if she wasn't back I'd know she when that away or that away. She was always back, but now you think 'you never know who's out in these bushy places'. That's a bit of a worry I think today. And I think about, children are being brought up to be worried. See when our

kids were little you didn't have that, they trusted people. The little kids today are more or less being, well not told, but getting the impression that you can't trust people. Now for instance, this is nothing to do with this, my father who is one hundred and two (102) now, but he liked to go and sit in a park at ninety (90) to see the kids playing. Dad [saw] a little girl, she was about six (6) or something he said hello to her or something, 'oh you like the park' and the mother came over and grabbed that kid and took her away. Ninety (90) year old man asking, now what impression did that child get? There's a nice gentleman saying you know 'you like coming to the park' what's wrong with that? Dad said 'I couldn't believe it'. So that's something that's sneaking in up here lately, you'd never think twice about your children running over to the park or going up to the oval, now it's like 'oh, you don't know who might be up there' which is a great pity. Children don't trust things and they're not learning to work it out. Or to say 'I'm fine thanks' and go off. Anyway nothing to do with what we're talking about but I do find that, I mean it's not just Kalamunda, it's everywhere and it's a great pity because older people are being denied, if you like, going and watching; what's wrong with seeing kiddies playing in a park or something? But other than that, I had a marvellous childhood myself, I was an only child, young parents and we just did everything together. Camped and my father built a dinghy, we used to be on the river every weekend and we'd go somewhere and camp on the beach, stay for the night. We all had a bike and did everything by bike, so it was, don't take any notice of this, when I was at school I can remember kids would say 'have you got any brothers and sisters?' that sort of thing. I was an only child 'no I haven't', 'oh you must be spoiled', that sort of thing. And my standard reply was 'well actually no, there's only me to do the chores, no one to help me'. I had that one off pat (laughs), when they used to say 'oh you're spoilt'. There was no money to spoil me, I mean my father worked on the wharf, a third of his wages paid rent.

### **My final-**

You've probably worked it out that I was a nurse.

### **Yes I didn't ask you about that.**

I did both, I did midi [midwifery] as well at King Edward, it was great. Anyway, yes Alethea.

### **Well, no if you want to continue on with your nursing-**

Oh no, it's funny when you thought of things, that do come. I mean that was a great time in my life, I just loved every minute of it and that's why I loved being up here and when they got this place and had midwifery there I was right into that and I'd only been there twelve (12) months and I went into theatre.

(20:07)

They asked if I'd be interested, well 'yes please, thank you very much'. Loved every minute of it. This has not to do with that, Bill and I, because he's from England; he'd always said 'one day he'd like to go for a holiday back to England'. Anyway I was coming on for fifty (50) at the time, I was working, and I said to Bill 'I'll work another year and [with] that money, we're going overseas' and we did. We were gone for six (6) months, wonderful. Went all over the place because Julie was working in Sweden at the time, she worked for Foreign Affairs, and so we stayed with her for ages in her flat and got taken everywhere and had the most marvellous time. So that last year of my working life was for us. People said when we came back 'oh now you've got the bug, you'll be off'. I said 'never, it would never be the same', it was such a wonderful experience, that's all I need. I don't need to go again and we never

have. And never regretted not going, and [Bill has] got it all on film anyway sometimes I say to him 'could we go to Norway this week?' (laughs) and he'll fossick through his stuff and we'll put that on. So yes, that was our reward at the end, we had our six (6) months overseas, it was great.

**That's fantastic.**

Just for interest because you're into this thing, we have a friend who is right into genealogy business and I told him one day, it was when my dad was going to be a hundred (100) and I said 'my dad's a hundred (100) next week'. Anyway a week or two (2) went by and he came and said 'I've got something for you 'your father will be one of a very [few] people, because census have to be a hundred (100) years old before, [being available] it will be able to do what I'm going to show you'. 'What is it?' My father was on the census that was one hundred (100) years ago, aged nine (9) weeks, isn't that beautiful.

**That's amazing.**

So in a sort of a way, I mean nothing ever fantastically overwhelming, dramatic exciting apart from our trip, but we've had an interesting life. It's fine to me, I want nothing more, I'm quite happy to just have those things. And I don't shop much, I have stuff for years and years and think 'what's wrong with it, it's alright I don't want anymore, that's fine' (laughs). So there you go. And we're very happily married, fifty seven (57) years.

**I was going to ask you about Kalamunda Hospital and how many staff they had in those days?**

When it was a proper hospital?

**Yes.**

We were always flat out busy, full because we had all the baby end; down one end was all midwifery down there and that was always full on. And because we had [two] proper theatres and surgeons visiting we were doing surgery every day. There'd be probably six (6) of us on a shift and then you'd be on call. You'd be "on call" and then there'd be people that that on call person would call if they needed, it could be two (2) o'clock in the morning or some such thing. It was very busy all the time and because they had out patients as well, people came as out patients, x-ray department; all that had to be staffed. Loved it, it was a great place.

**Although they are getting more services back at the hospital there now aren't they?**

Anyway that Mead Medical [Centre] is like a hospital now. Have you seen it?

**No I haven't seen it finished.**

I had to go for Bill the other day, there are so many rooms and specialist rooms. That's one thing they have got, a visiting heart person, different specialities. Yes they probably come a certain day a week or whatever they've got that sorted out which would be a great help for people, save you going down to Midland. I think it will all work out eventually but it must have cost a fortune. It's nearly ten (10) years since they first started to think about it and now they've moved in. So there we go and it has a lot of services.

**(25:12)**

**It is quite good. So quite busy, that's good to know. One last question. What do you feel is special about Kalamunda and the surrounding area? As a summary.**

It's where it is. The weather's wonderful, love it; love the hills, the air's fresh and it is just that far enough away from the hurley burley. Getting a little bit hurley burley on Thursday mornings and Fridays up there but generally speaking it's not really. People are just spreading out further, mind you, have you noticed, well of course you would have noticed, Boonooloo Road is turning into units.

**Yes I have noticed that.**

Bill calls it Kalavilla (laughs).

**Thank you very much, and I'll stop the tape.**

Interview ends 26 minutes

**Oral History interview**

**Pauline Young**

**Interview date: 27 August 2011**

**Conducted by Alethea du Boulay**



**It's the 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011 my name is Alethea du Boulay and I'm interviewing Pauline Young for my Curtin University thesis project – the role of oral history to interpret a place.**

**I'll just start with your name and your birth date please Pauline.**

Pauline Young which is nee Beazley. Date of birth is the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1942.

**Thank you. Tell me a little bit about your family please.**

Well, my parents were Methodist missionaries in Rabaul, New Britain from approximately 1940 to 1942. My father was a technical instructor to the indigenous people. When word came that the Japanese invasion was on its way, the women and children were evacuated. My mother was pregnant with me, her first child. She came to live at Kalamunda and had me on the 30<sup>th</sup> of August 1942. We lived in a cottage with my maternal grandmother whose house it was, and it had formerly been a holiday cottage in Recreation Road. There was no news of my father or the other missionaries as they had been taken prisoner by the Japanese. When I was three (3) years old my mother received the dreaded telegram to say my father was dead. He and the other missionaries, it was believed, had been herded onto a Japanese cargo ship, later thought to be the *Montevideo Maru* to be taken to Japan for work. However on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 1942 the ship was torpedoed by an American submarine captained by somebody Wright. All people on board were lost. My mother, grandmother and I continued to live together in Kalamunda and belonged to the Methodist Church on the corner of Railway Road and Mead Street. Both my mum and nanna were very devout churchgoers and worked hard for the church. My grandmother died in 1958, my last year at school.

**Thank you. So were you born at home in Kalamunda or in a hospital?**

Well, I was actually born in Leederville, but my mother was living here; she just went down to have me and then came back.

**What are your earliest memories of Kalamunda?**

Well, my memories are of the church and the Sunday School and Christian Endeavour in those days, and I can remember my mother pushing me in a cane pram around the small town. We did not have a car so walked everywhere or caught a bus if we wanted to go to Perth. When I was nine (9) my mother started a job at the Methodist Church office in Murray Street, Perth, working three (3) days a week and she caught a bus to the city on those days and she worked there for many years.

**Ok.**

Did you want any more about that?

**A little bit more. So do you remember much about the shops or the layout of Kalamunda?**

Yes. I've got here [referring to notes], Kalamunda did not have scheme water during my childhood, instead we had rainwater tanks. Sometimes the water had wriggles, baby mosquitoes, in them (laughs) but we drank the water just the same. It tasted very nice. Our toilet was right down the back yard and a night man collected the pan each week leaving a clean one for us. We had no telephone but relied on a public

phone on the corner of Recreation and Boonooloo Roads. I also have a very vague memory of going down the zigzag in the local train with my mother and our neighbour and her children. I think I was about three (3). There were the most beautiful wildflowers on either side of the track in those days but people stripped the bush of them and now there are mainly weeds.

We had to go up to the post office in Railway Road opposite the Methodist Church for our mail, bought our milk deposited in our billy can by a man with a horse and cart and there was a man called Reg who drove a ute to the houses around with fresh vegetables on the back. Mum and nanna would buy some each week. Mr Crabb, Ailsa Harwood's father, David Crabb, Ailsa's brother or Pat Hallahan would deliver our order each week. We also went up to the shop to buy things in small amounts. The shop had a counter and all goods were weighed on scales and put in paper bags, as far as I can remember. I often carried out this chore. Now I thought I'd put here that the shop was on the other side of the road from what it is now. You know, where the car park is.

(5:09)

**Yes, on Heath Road.**

So, where the ANZ Bank [located on the corner of Canning Road and Haynes Street, newsagents, post office and Mensland now stand [in Barber Street] was all bush, as was, oh yes, where IGA now stands; that's right. I've got a memory of a circus coming there and we children helped look after some Shetland ponies (laughs).

Canning Road had pine trees on both sides of the road and on the left hand side as you leave Kalamunda was Portwine's Bakery. These people also owned horses, I think racehorses, which they kept in a series of corrals behind the shop. We bought our bread from there. Barber Street was a narrow road with the Church of England church and hall standing more or less opposite the horses. A Dr Barber lived in the street; hence the name Barber Street. He seemed very old to me when I was a child. He must've been retired then as we didn't ever consult him. Haynes Street had tennis courts approximately where Bunnings now stands. The Kookaburra delicatessen was next to them on the corner of Haynes Street and Canning Road. Behind this in Canning Road was a boot maker's business. At the top of the town where the library now stands was a vacant block. The Child Welfare Clinic was opposite the present parking lot, I think, that's a bit vague, and the Church of Christ, a very small building, was nearby in Spring Street. I have seen Kalamunda grow from a small village to a thriving metropolis with Coles Central and many other shops. Should I continue?

**Yes.**

In the early days what was later to become Stirk Medical Group was a cottage painted white with one doctor attending. Earlier than this the only doctor lived in the house that still remains on the corner of Burt Street and Central Road. On the opposite side of Burt Street from the doctor's was the Methodist manse, now a business centre.

My friends and I went to Kalamunda Primary School from 1948 to 1955. When I was seven (7) years old my mother and I moved to New South Wales as my mother was asked by the church to be the housekeeper at the Methodist Missionary Training College in Haberfield. We didn't like it much (laughs) and missed Kalamunda so after fifteen (15) months we returned. I had to repeat second



standard because schooling over here was behind that in New South Wales. That was a bit of a blob but anyway I've got all these friends now that I wouldn't have had if I'd gone on higher. There was no high school here then, so my friends and I caught a school bus and travelled to Midland High School each day. I went as far as the Junior Certificate, which I passed. I worked in an office in Perth for a while, then went nursing at Fremantle and later at Katanning but I was unsuited to this profession and decided to be a teacher. I did my Leaving Certificate at night school the first year and then got a job at Mogumber Methodist Mission for part Aboriginal children where I looked after the little ones as an untrained kindergarten teacher. I completed the Leaving Certificate by correspondence while I was there. I managed to enter Kindergarten Teachers College in West Perth for a three (3) year course and after graduating was sent to Goomalling in the Wheatbelt where I worked as teacher in charge for two (2) years. My advisory teacher, a Miss Fox then gave me a transfer to Woodlands Kindergarten in the Perth suburbs.

**Ok. I'll just stop you there for a minute. So what did your friends and you do in your spare time after school?**

Yes; I forgot to put that in. Well on Saturday afternoons we used to go up to the Agricultural Hall and there'd be a couple of films on so we watched them. But during the holidays, especially with one friend, we always went and played in the bush which was nearby. She lived in Windsor Road or was it, no, Robins, well sort of on the corner of Robins and Windsor; and there was lots of bush there. We had our favourite spots like trees that were on the lean that you could easily climb and that sort of thing, yes (laughs). We played at each other's houses and yeah generally had a pretty good time.

(10:06)

**What was the size of the primary school, Kalamunda Primary School when you were going?**

Well we just had one class of each class, if you know what I mean. There were infants, first standard, second standard, third, fourth, fifth, sixth. Yeah; sixth standard.

**And that was where the school was in Heath Road, wasn't it?**

Yes, yes.

**So were there multiple classrooms to split the kids up?**

First of all they were just asbestos type rooms separated but then later on when I was in about fifth or, yeah, fifth standard, they got prefabs along the front. And there had always been bush just in front of that, but they got rid of all that and they put a flagpole up and that sort of thing. Some people used to ride horses to school (laughs); just a few of them but they tethered them up at the front gate sort of thing.

**So you walked to school?**

Yes, because we were in Recreation Road so it wasn't very far to go to school.

**Did you go to the Kalamunda Show?**

Oh yes. We always went to the show, yes. And I also belonged to first of all Brownies and then Guides and I didn't go to any camps but I was the Secunder of a

patrol in guides and we used to go into the bush and play 'stalking' which was my favourite thing. You had to, you know, creep through the bush without being seen and then when you were seen they'd call out your name (laughs) and you had to get out of the game; and that sort of thing. And also we used to, where we used to go for that, not far away was Rocky Pool, and we used to go swimming there when there was water in it.

**Excellent.**

That's about all I can remember of those days.

**Okay. So, I guess when you were growing up, did you travel to Perth very often? I know you said your mum was working in Perth.**

Yes, I did go fairly often but then of course I would've been at school. It must've been in the holidays, yes. Yes; I went down there. And then later on of course when I was a teenager we used to go out on Saturday nights, you know the friends and I, and catch a bus down there and see a film or something like that (doorbell). Sorry about that.

**Did you go to any dances in the city as well or just to the movies?**

Well we actually learnt dancing after school in Midland, Gilkinson's which is very well known, but I can't remember going in Perth. I know one of my friends used to go every week and she had lots of boyfriends because she used to meet them there, but I don't think I did from what I can recollect.

**Were there those sorts of social events in Kalamunda at that time, dances and things?**

Well the church was very active. We used to have lots of socials and they were really good fun (laughs) because of course nobody had TV or anything; so, yes, we used to go to them. And also we had the Sunday School anniversary which was a very big occasion. We had the big school in the morning and the kindergarten children in the afternoon. Then on the following, probably Monday or Tuesday we would have a tea, a high tea, and get our prizes and have a film.

**That is a big event.**

Yes. What else did we used to do? Oh, we had a Sunday School picnic once a year and we went by bus down to the river.

**Whereabouts by the river?**

Well I'm a bit vague about this. I think, no, I don't know. We went to different spots, you know, and we used to swim there of course. We had watermelon, which was a rarity in those days, and cordial which we never used to have very much of; so that was a big occasion (laughs).

(15:11)

**Just going back to what you were talking about before with your nursing, you decided to do nursing but didn't like it when you started.**

Well, they didn't like me because the trouble is I have had a lot of mental illness, which I haven't put in here, but it was partly due to that and it was too much stress. I

was very disappointed because I'd always wanted to be a nurse, yeah; but God gave me something that suited me much more which was with the little ones, kindergarten.

**So how did you go at the mission? Was that interesting?**

Yes. I felt very sorry for them, you know the kids. They weren't from the stolen generation I don't think, but their mothers were young teenagers probably and they left them there and went back to the reserve or whatever. So they lived in cottages there with a cottage mother. There were quite a few cottages.

**Did you live on site as well?**

Yes. There was a little school there, just from grades one to three, and the teacher and I lived in a flat each. They were brand new when I went there so that was nice. Yes; and then in the last term of my year there, there was a very nice girl came to teach and we used to organise parties with the school and kindergarten together.

**And then you went to Woodlands?**

Well first of all it was through being an untrained teacher that I went to Teachers College. The Superintendent of Mogumber, the Reverend Ernie Clarke, got me into it because those schools that were like on missions or things were attached to what was then called the Kindergarten Teachers Union. And they used to send someone out; like a doctor would come, a lady doctor with a nurse to check the children's health and that sort of thing. The head people down at the College would send someone up to see how I was going and I suppose they suggested that I do my training so I went to college. It was really amazing because it had already started, it had been going for a month of that year and there was no room in the class for me but a girl suddenly decided that she would like to go to university instead of College so she left and there was a space; so I got in (laughs).

**And how long was that course for?**

Three (3) years. Oh yes, as I said we also went to Claremont Teachers College, just one day a week I think it was.

**Very interesting.**

And of course we went to kindergartens around the place on practice. And in the last year I was at Kalamunda and I had to run the kindergarten for two (2) weeks, I think it was, with these scary supervisors coming to take notes on what you were doing and everything but luckily I passed (laughs).

**That's good. So how long were you at Woodlands kindergarten?**

Only one year, see I went to Goomalling first in the Wheatbelt, and I was there for two (2) years and that was very rough because they just had an old schoolroom out in the middle of nowhere sort of thing; but they were trying to get a round kindergarten which was the latest thing. In my last term there we finally moved into it, but then I got this transfer to Woodlands and by then we were married, Ray and I.

**Ok well I'll ask you about Ray then.**

Ok. Well we had a correspondence romance because I couldn't seem to find anyone I liked at all and I saw in the paper that there was this organisation called Cynthia's Introduction Service so I put my name down there. A few men came up to take me out but mum got rid of them at the front door (laughs) because they weren't very suitable.

(20:01)

And then when I was just starting my second year at Goomalling I got this mysterious letter from a Mr Raymond Young and he lived in England, in Aldershot, Hampshire. And he went up to London to Australia House and he got some newspapers and one of them was the West Australian. He saw this Cynthia's Introduction Service so he got his name put down. And then apparently Cynthia or whoever she was, gave him about three (3) names and one person was already married, I don't think he heard from the other one and then there was me (laughs). We started writing and it was obvious that he wanted to come out here, so my mother and I sponsored him out and he was what was known then as a ten (10) pound tourist. Have you heard of them?

**Yes.**

And so then my mum got him accommodation with the Reverend Fred Sampson and his family down at Victoria Park. So he would stay there for the week and then come up to our place for the weekend because I used to come, by then I had a car you see, so I used to drive down from Goomalling each weekend. So then, we really clicked, so we got engaged in the September of that year which was 1968 and then we married on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1969 at Kalamunda Methodist Church and Fran Blyth's father was the minister then and he performed the ceremony. Then we went to Woodlands and we got a flat there but once again we missed Kalamunda (laughs) so we came back and stayed with my mum while we got our house built in Darlington because that was lovely and bushy there with a reserve opposite.

**How did Ray adjust to coming to Australia?**

Very well, when he first came he said 'I'm going to give it two (2) years' or something I think he said and mum and I said 'oh we'll make sure he doesn't go back in two (2) years' (laughs). So by the time that was up he just had no thought of going back at all (laughs). So we have been back once to England and we hope to go maybe next year again.

**So you were building your house in Darlington, so how long did you live in Darlington?**

Four (4) years, just four (4). We had Nikalee, my elder daughter in 1970 when we lived there and then two (2) years later we had our other daughter Melanie, '72; but by the time she was two (2) we decided to come back because my mother was most unwell and she wasn't happy living over there. So we built this house in Temby Avenue and then she died and as I say we lived there for seven (7) years and then we came here.

**And your daughters went to the local primary school and high school?**

Yes they went to Kalamunda primary school too.

**I guess it would have changed a bit?**

Yes, yes it had; quite a few more buildings and so on; but it was still, well smaller than it is now.

**Ok, is there anything else you want to add to that section of the interview?**

(checks notes)

Oh I think I was up to, I wrote about being involved in organisations and things. Did you want that, is that too soon?

**It's a little bit too soon, I'll ask that in a minute. So talking about how the primary school's changed, how has the Kalamunda town centre changed I guess from when you came back from Darlington perhaps?**

Oh yes.

**Had it changed much?**

I think it was rather like what I read out before. But, yes there was no bush left at all in the township.

(25:14)

The tennis courts had vanished and Barberry Square had Freecorns in it, that's one of the main things I remember. And there was still the one doctor, at what became the Stirk Medical Group because, oh that's right I didn't think of this before, but Nikalee actually got pneumonia, oh we were living in Darlington then but we always used to come over to Kalamunda to do shopping and go to the doctors. So she ended up in Kalamunda Hospital for a couple of weeks. So that was there then, which hadn't been; oh it was a little private one I think before that, a little private hospital but was a Government one by then.

**And then I guess since then it's had quite a lot of changes.**

Yes it has, yes.

**You mentioned Coles.**

Coles, yes first of all Coles was sort of by itself up the road. There was Central Road was running along and on the corner of Central Road and Burt Street there was a dressmakers and that's where I got my wedding dress made. And then Coles was sort of behind that and there was a big parking area but that's all gone now except for the special parking areas like under the two (2) storey ones. There was nothing like that then it was just an open area, there were lines marking the parking spots.

**You mentioned some of the businesses in the town centre, can you think of any others that you might have missed or is that about all?**

Now I know I wrote them down somewhere (checking notes).

**I might ask you something about the Crabb's store actually.**

Oh yes I know I wrote that down here somewhere but I can't seem to find it.

**That's alright, you mentioned it earlier.**

Yes Crabb's, it was always there to me and it was just a little shop where their parking lot is now near the church [on Heath Road]. Ailsa's parents and family lived in a little house right next door, right up close to the road and there was a hedge between their house and the footpath. I would go sometimes and buy things, it wasn't a self-service by any means it was just a counter. I think it was mainly David Crabb, which was Ailsa's brother, he's since passed on; who did the serving. Everything was weighed on scales and put in paper bags. I think I said that didn't I?

**Yes.**

I used to walk up there to get things, but of course we didn't have a car so they delivered our groceries for us; we'd make out a list and leave it there. Someone would call at the door 'grocer' and bring in the box.

**So they were the main grocers in Kalamunda?**

Yes they were. Up in Haynes Street there were things like, there was the newsagents which was run by, oh no I'd better not go into that I forget, oh Steer's that's right. Steer's and they used to sell things like fireworks at Guy Fawke's Night and we used to love saving up our money and buying all these nice things to send up in the air (laughs). And just near them was a greengrocers.

(30:07)

There mainly seemed to be shops down both sides by then. Kostera's garage was on the corner of, was it Central? well it was up the hill anyway.

**Up the Railway Road end of Haynes Street?**

Yes that's right.

**You mentioned you were involved in Brownies and church activities, were there any other community groups or organisations that you or your mother were involved in?**

No I don't think so.

**Is there anything else you wanted to mention about the groups that you were involved with?**

Well of course I've already mentioned about Sunday School haven't I?

**Yes.**

And Guides, I can't really think of anything else. Sorry about that.

**That's alright. Ok, do you remember, you mentioned the train, do you remember the train station and things still being in operation or had they all closed down?**

No that's a bit too vague.

**So was the area still used by the railways up the top of Haynes Street?**

No I think they just stopped it, for a long time the actual tracks were there but then they removed those.

**So who were some of the local identities in the area?**

Well I always remember Pat Hallahan, do you know him?

**Yes.**

But I really can't think of anyone else. Oh there was Joan Haynesworth, she was a Lieutenant of Guides and her mother was a very active person in the church too and she was my Sunday School teacher for quite a while. Joan actually ended up going to New Guinea as a Bible translator and she still goes there; she still lives in Kalamunda but she's not there very much, she's mainly in New Guinea. She must be over seventy (70) I just don't know how she keeps going (laughs) but really I couldn't think of anyone apart from them.

**Ok. That's alright. Is there anything else on your notes that you wanted to mention?**

Well I was just going to say what we do now but you probably don't want that.

**Yes, definitely.**

At the moment I'm involved in the following organisations in the local community, mainly the Kalamunda Uniting Church. These are the choir, Ladies Guild, I'm the President, Ladies Evening Fellowship, Jump and Jiggle children's playgroup. I taught Sunday School for approximately forty five (45) years (laughs), been the Superintendent of the kindergarten class at the old church for seven (7) of those years. For many years I was a member of the Kalamunda Community Hospital Auxiliary arranging flowers for the patients and attending the monthly meetings. Then I also had a number of paid jobs around here and these were cleaning the Lesmurdie and Kalamunda High Schools, being a relief teacher at Kalamunda, Lesmurdie, Falls Road Primary Schools and Spring Road Community Kindergarten when this establishment was in Barber Street at first and then Spring Road. I was also a carer for the Alzheimer's Association, having a number of patients who lived locally.

**So you would go and visit them?**

Yes. What I did was I relieved their usual carers, like you know their daughters or somebody like that. Just for a day a week and they would be able to get out and do whatever they wanted. Oh I did say about some other things, should I go on with that?

**Yes.**

My husband Ray is a member of the church choir and has been in the Kalamunda Community Choir.

(35:02)

He has been a Steward for the church and also a microphone operator, I didn't know what you call them. Many years ago my mother was a member of the quarterly meeting which was the Methodist Churches way of governing the church, superintendent of the kindergarten Sunday School and was in the choir. My grandmother was either the Treasurer or Secretary of the Ladies Guild when I was in early primary school; I don't know which but I know she wouldn't have been the President because in those days the Minister's wife was always the President.

What have I got here, oh I've just gone on to say what Kalamunda means to me, is that a bit too early?

**No, I'll just ask you the question. So in all your years of living in Kalamunda what do you think is special about Kalamunda?**

Well its home to me and I'm sure I'll always feel like this til my life's end. I love the trees and bush and the orchards and the city views with the river and the ocean in the distance. I also like various businesses like IGA and the newsagents, that's the lower ones; Coles and also the chemist and Stirk Medical Group. Stirk Park is an enjoyable place and another of my favourite places is the library. I have quite a number of friends here; and family and a friend in High Wycombe which is not far away.

**So really it's got everything that you need here.**

Yes that's right.

**Excellent. Is there anything else you wanted to add that you can think of?**

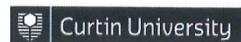
No I can't really think of anything.

**That's ok. Well thank you very much, I'll stop the interview. And thank you for your time.**

Interview ends 37 minutes



## Appendix 3 – Interviewee consent forms



### Information Sheet

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I am a student currently studying Master Philosophy Creative Arts- Cultural Heritage at Curtin University. My research project will investigate the use of oral history in recording historical information about a place, and I have chosen Kalamunda as a case study for this research. The research will also investigate how this information can be used to have a better understanding of the changes occurring in a place.

I am conducting twenty oral history interviews with members of the Kalamunda community. Your participation in this project, by consenting to be interviewed, is a crucial part of the research. It is anticipated that the time to complete the interview will be 1-1.5 hours. Your name will be used in research and publication, unless indicated on the consent form. You can withdraw your consent to the interview at any time. You will be provided with a transcript and audio copy of the interview.

If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Laurie Bechelli (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 22 / 12 / 11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au).

I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have with how this study has been conducted or alternatively you can contact Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee should you wish to make a complaint on ethical grounds.

Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary) C/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845.

Phone: 9266 2784

Email: [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).

This project has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, approval reference number BE-37-2010.

**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Laurie Bechelli (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

☒ I give permission for the use of this interview conducted with me for research and publication as outlined in the information sheet.


I agree to take part in this research on the understanding that: (please choose one)

- ☒ My name may be used in published material
- ☐ My name will not be used in published material
- ☐ My name may be used with the following restrictions

☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying can be stored and used for future research and publication

☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying may not be used for any other project without my consent

☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying should be used in the following way

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 22/12/11

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.


Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Wesley Nigel GARP (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 30/9/11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Wesley Nigel Ford (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying should be used in the following way

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 30/8/11

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I JILL FARRANT (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Personal details covered for privacy

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary) C/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845.

Phone: 9266 2784

Email: [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).

This project has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, approval reference number BE-37-2010.



**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Jill Falcant (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

☒ I give permission for the use of this interview conducted with me for research and publication as outlined in the information sheet.


I agree to take part in this research on the understanding that: (please choose one)

- ☒ My name may be used in published material
- ☐ My name will not be used in published material
- ☐ My name may be used with the following restrictions

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☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying should be used in the following way

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Personal details covered for privacy

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 27/8/2011

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I am a student currently studying Master Philosophy Creative Arts- Cultural Heritage at Curtin University. My research project will investigate the use of oral history in recording historical information about a place, and I have chosen Kalamunda as a case study for this research. The research will also investigate how this information can be used to have a better understanding of the changes occurring in a place.

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I AUSA HARWOOD (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: Ausa Harwood

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 10/6/11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I AISA HARWOOD. (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: Alethea du Boulay

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date:

10/6/11



**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

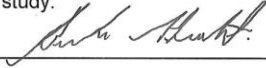
Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Alethea du Boulay (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 28.02.12

Personal details covered for privacy

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Alethea du Boulay (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 28.02.17

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

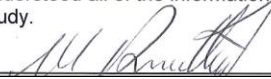
Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I MICHAEL HUNTER (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Ad

Personal details covered for privacy

Ph

Em

Date:

28/2/2012

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I MICHAEL HUNTLEY (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 28/2/2012

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I, interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed (please print) have read, or had read to me, the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 1-3-13

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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Signature of participant: interviewee requested that her name is not disclosed

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Personal details covered for privacy

1-3-13

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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I CAROL KERR (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Address

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 4-6-11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: Carol Kerr

Address

Phone

Email:

Personal details covered for privacy

Date: 4-6-11



**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

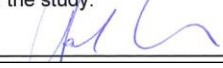
Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Paul Lewis (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 25/9/11

Personal details covered for privacy

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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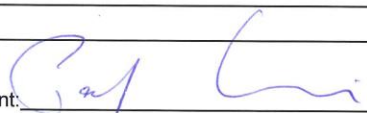
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Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Personal details covered for privacy

25/9/11

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I MARCIA MAHER (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: Marcia Maher

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 26/04/2013

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I MARCIA MAHER (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: Marcia Maher

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 26/04/2013

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.


Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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Signature of participant: 

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Personal details covered for privacy

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> Jun 2011

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Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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☐ The information such as photographs which I supply for copying should be used in the following way

Signature of participant: 

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 4.6.2011

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I am a student currently studying Master Philosophy Creative Arts- Cultural Heritage at Curtin University. My research project will investigate the use of oral history in recording historical information about a place, and I have chosen Kalamunda as a case study for this research. The research will also investigate how this information can be used to have a better understanding of the changes occurring in a place.

I am conducting twenty oral history interviews with members of the Kalamunda community. Your participation in this project, by consenting to be interviewed, is a crucial part of the research. It is anticipated that the time to complete the interview will be 1-1.5 hours. Your name will be used in research and publication, unless indicated on the consent form. You can withdraw your consent to the interview at any time. You will be provided with a transcript and audio copy of the interview.

If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Elaine Sargent (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: E. Sargent

Add

Personal details covered for privacy

Pho

Em

Date: 16/3/12

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

I am happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have with how this study has been conducted or alternatively you can contact Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee should you wish to make a complaint on ethical grounds.

Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (Secretary) C/- Office of Research and Development, Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6845.

Phone: 9266 2784

Email: [hrec@curtin.edu.au](mailto:hrec@curtin.edu.au).

This project has been approved by the Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee, approval reference number BE-37-2010.

**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Elaine Sargent (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

☒ I give permission for the use of this interview conducted with me for research and publication as outlined in the information sheet.

I agree to take part in this research on the understanding that: (please choose one)

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of participant: E. Sargent

Personal details covered for privacy

Date: 16/3/12



**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I IDA SCOTT SMITH (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant:



Address

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone

Email

Date: 25/11/11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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Signature of participant:



Add

Pho

Em

Personal details covered for privacy

Date:

25/11/11

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Alethea M. Taylor (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: Alethea M. Taylor

Ad

Personal details covered for privacy

Ph

En

Date: 7/5/11

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Agnes Taylor (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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Signature of participant: A. M. Taylor

Address

Phone

Email

Personal details covered for privacy

Date: 7 May 2011

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Audrey Warburton (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: A. Warburton

Address:

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 16-3-2013

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I AUDREY WARBURTON (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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Signature of participant: A. F. Warburton

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date:

Personal details covered for privacy

**Information Sheet**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I am a student currently studying Master Philosophy Creative Arts- Cultural Heritage at Curtin University. My research project will investigate the use of oral history in recording historical information about a place, and I have chosen Kalamunda as a case study for this research. The research will also investigate how this information can be used to have a better understanding of the changes occurring in a place.

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If you are willing to participate in the research project please complete the details below.

I Pauline Young (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study.

Signature of participant: P. Young

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 27th August 2011

Personal details covered for privacy

If you require more information please feel free to contact me on 9293 4736 or [alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au](mailto:alethea.duboulay@postgrad.curtin.edu.au) (or Dr Jennifer Harris, my supervisor, on 9266 9266 (Curtin switchboard) or [Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au](mailto:Jennifer.Harris@curtin.edu.au)).

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**Consent Form**

Project: The role of oral history in interpreting a place.

Researcher: Alethea du Boulay – School of Built Environment, Curtin University

I Pauline Young (please print) have read, or had read to me if that is appropriate, and understood all of the information contained on the information sheet on the purposes of the study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and I understand that I can withdraw at any time.

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of participant: P. Young

Address

Personal details covered for privacy

Phone:

Email:

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> Aug. 2011